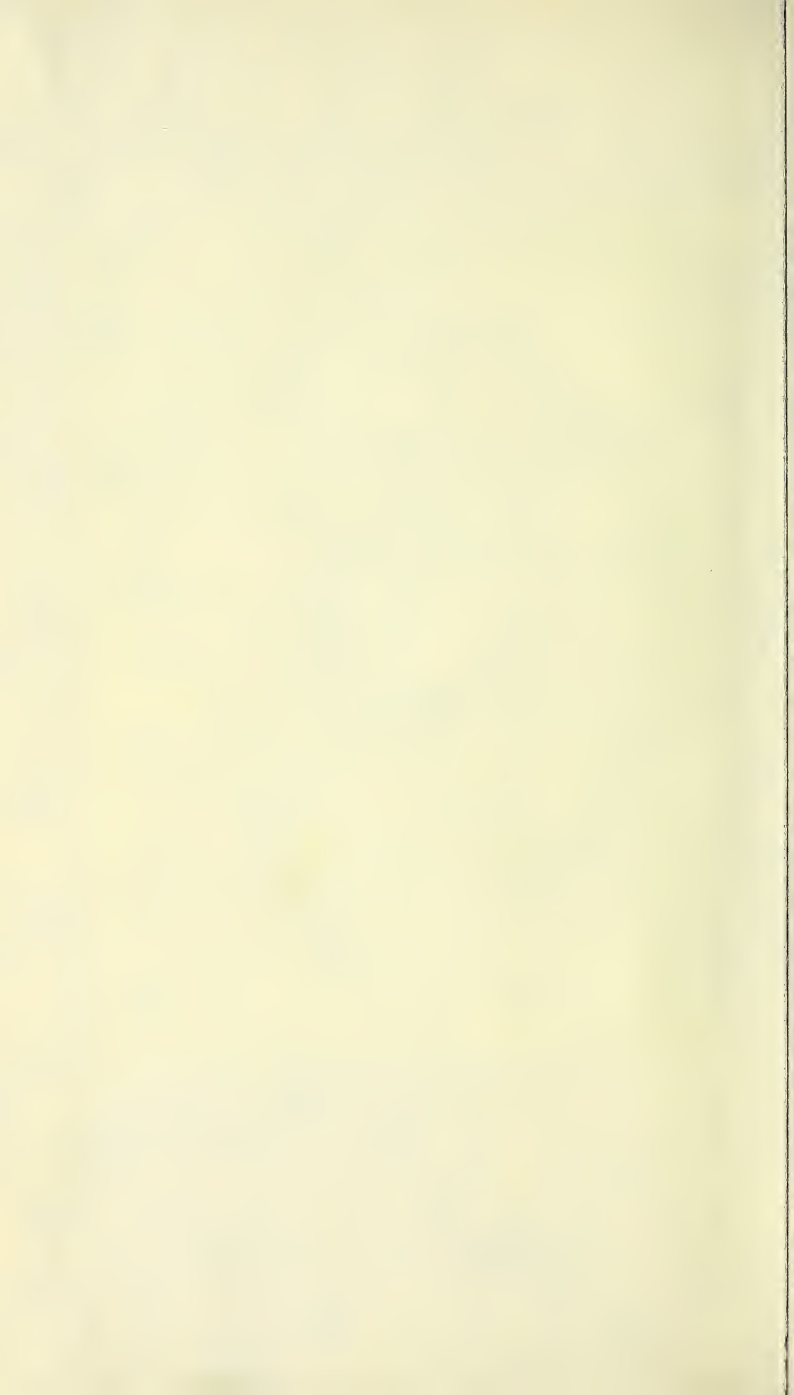


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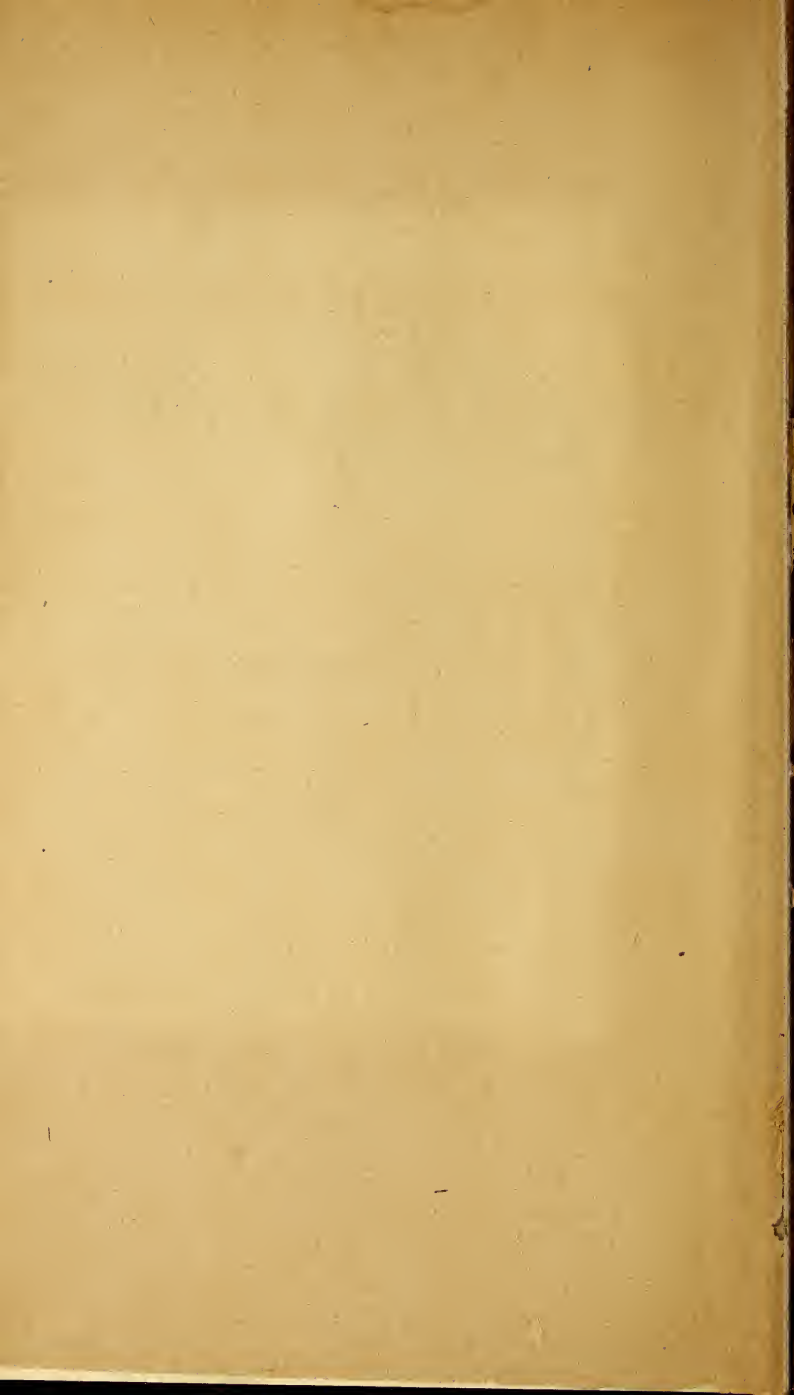






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COMIC RELIEF
AN OMNIBUS OF MODERN
AMERICAN HUMOR



COMIC RELIEF

AN OMNIBUS OF MODERN AMERICAN HUMOR

COMPILED BY

R. N. Linscott

Blue Ribbon Books

Garden City, N. Y.

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TO
BARBARA
WHO DID THE WORK



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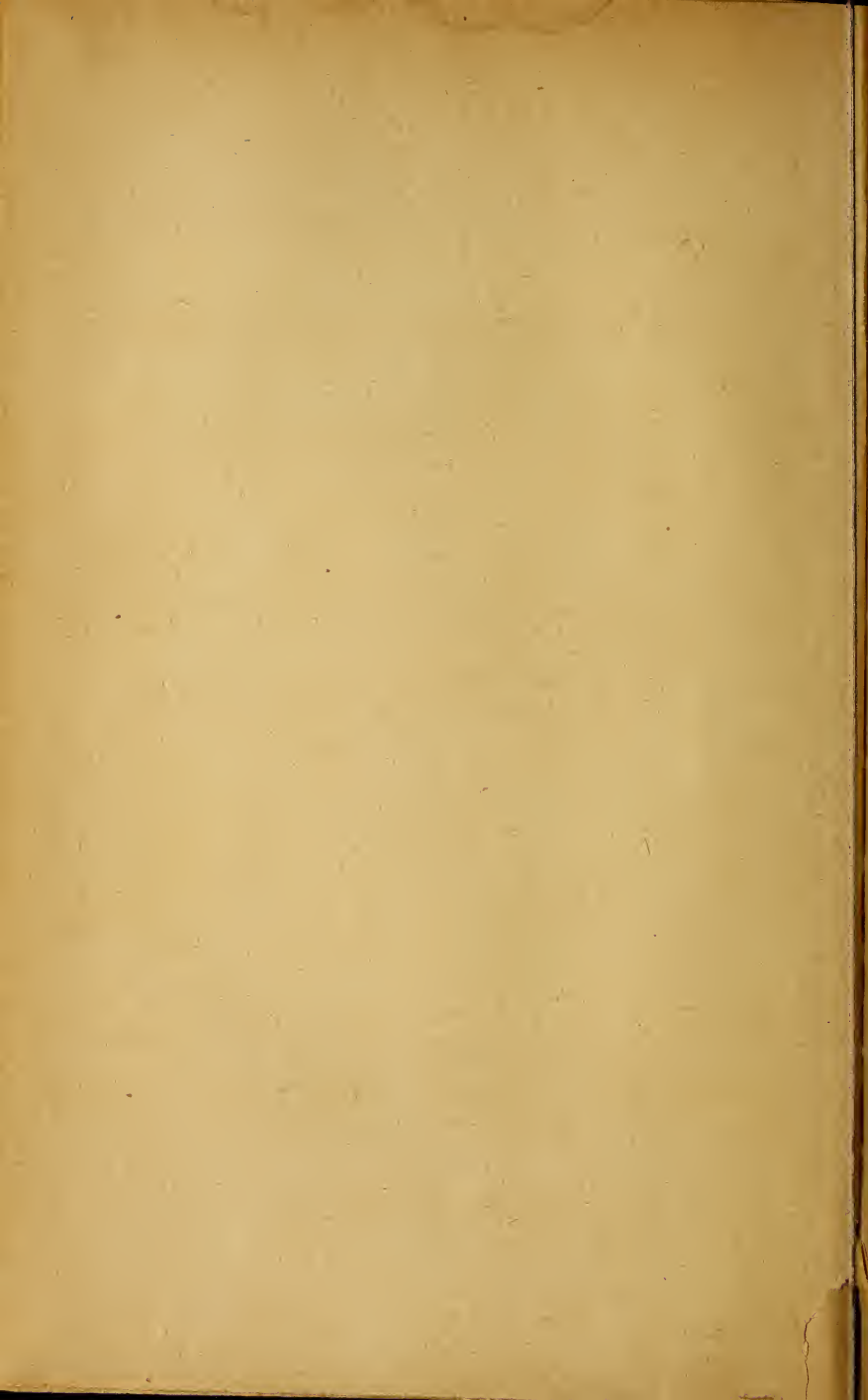
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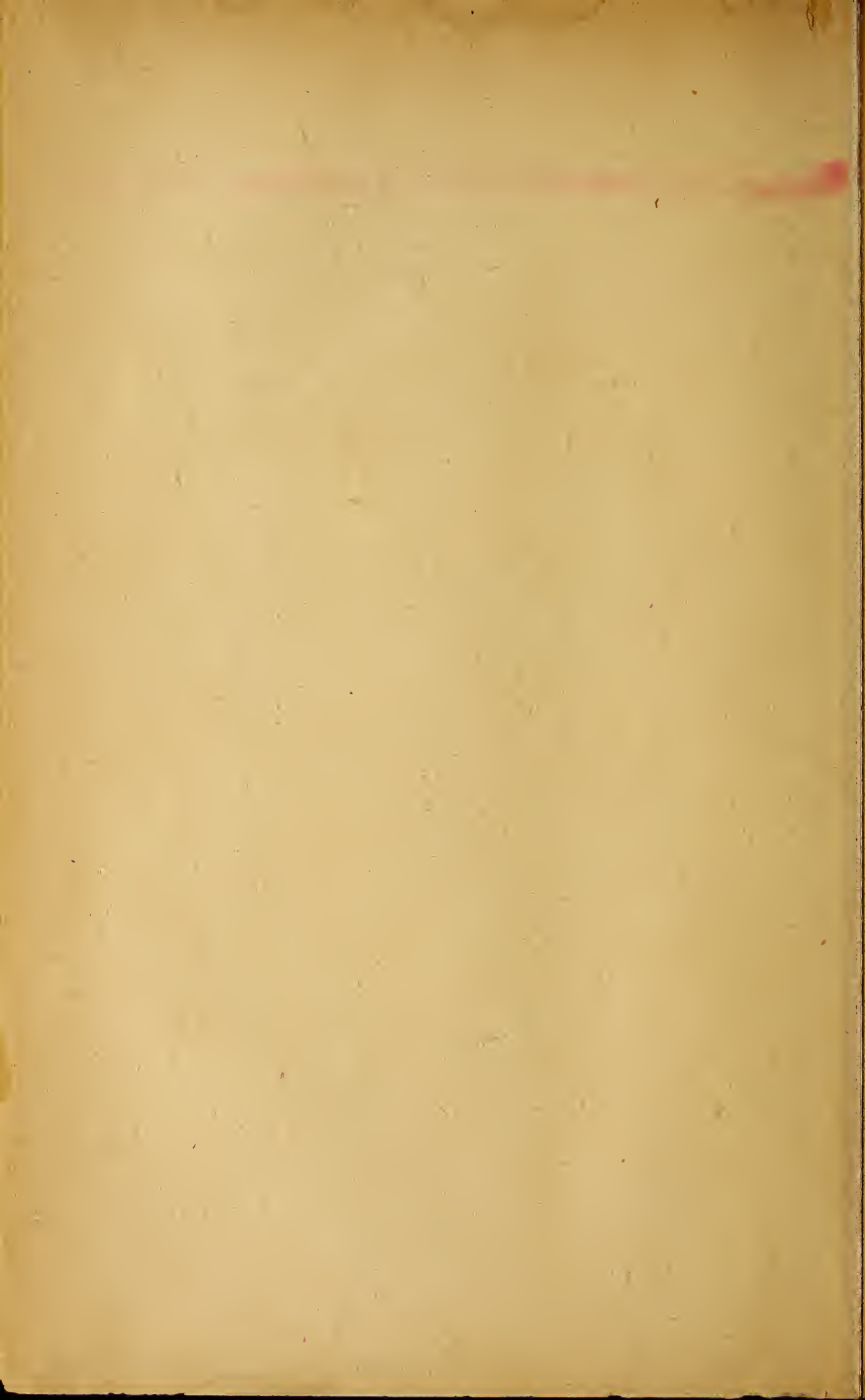
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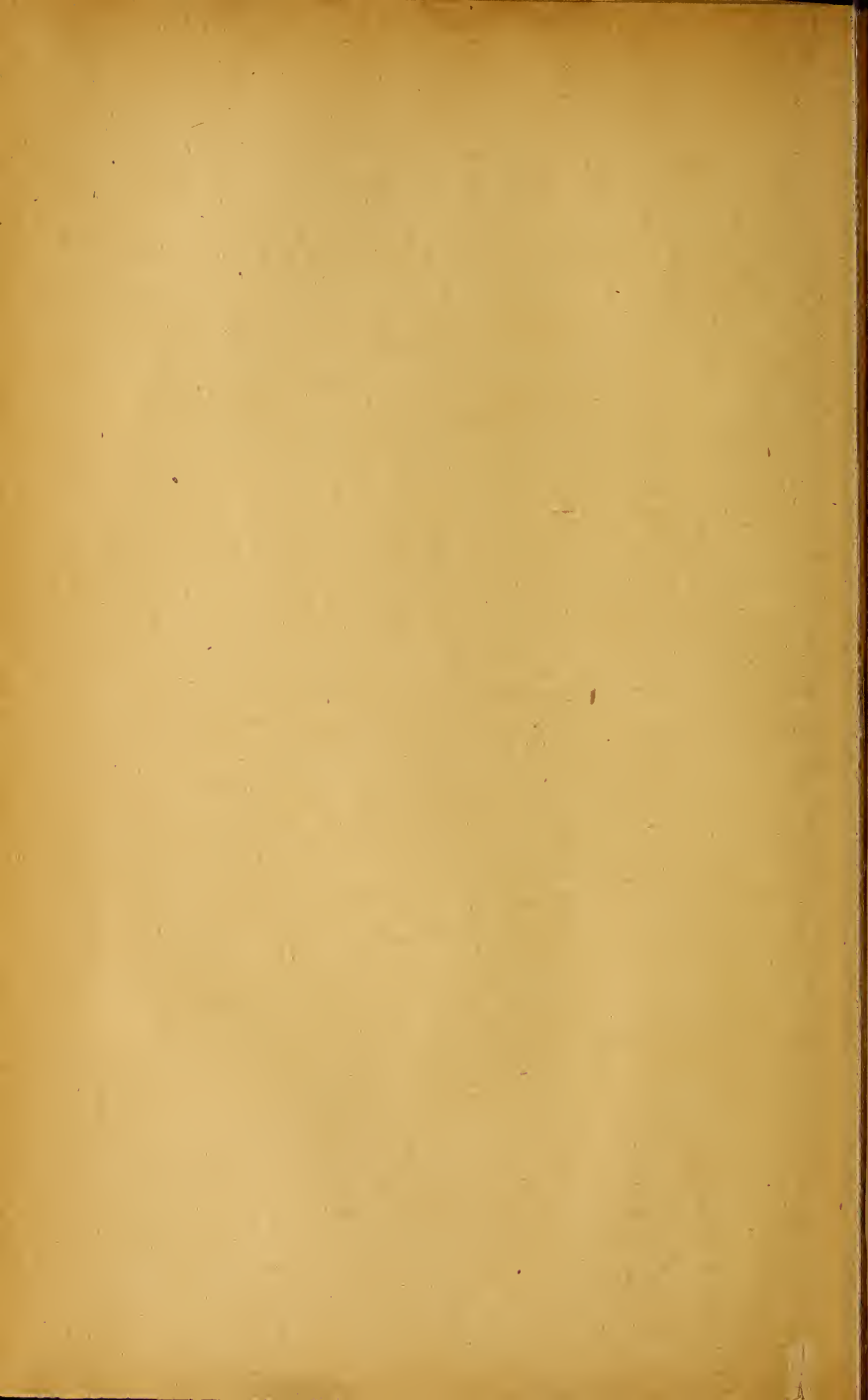
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COMIC RELIEF

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MY FINANCIAL CAREER

Stephen Leacock

WHEN I GO into a bank, I get rattled. The clerks rattle me; the wickets rattle me; the sight of the money rattles me; everything rattles me.

The moment I cross the threshold of a bank and attempt to transact business there, I become an irresponsible idiot.

I knew this beforehand, but my salary had been raised to fifty dollars a month and I felt that the bank was the only place for it.

So I shambled in and looked timidly round at the clerks. I had an idea that a person about to open an account must needs consult the manager.

I went up to a wicket marked 'Accountant.' The accountant was a tall, cool devil. The very sight of him rattled me. My voice was sepulchral.

'Can I see the manager?' I said, and added solemnly, 'alone.' I don't know why I said 'alone.'

'Certainly,' said the accountant, and fetched him.

The manager was a grave, calm man. I held my fifty-six dollars clutched in a crumpled ball in my pocket.

'Are you the manager?' I said. God knows I didn't doubt it.

'Yes,' he said.

'Can I see you,' I asked, 'alone?' I didn't want to say 'alone' again, but without it the thing seemed self-evident.

The manager looked at me in some alarm. He felt that I had an awful secret to reveal.

'Come in here,' he said, and led the way to a private room. He turned the key in the lock.

'We are safe from interruption here,' he said; 'sit down.'

We both sat down and looked at each other. I found no voice to speak.

'You are one of Pinkerton's men, I presume,' he said.

He had gathered from my mysterious manner that I was a detective. I knew what he was thinking, and it made me worse.

'No, not from Pinkerton's,' I said, seeming to imply that I came from a rival agency.

'To tell the truth,' I went on, as if I had been prompted to lie about it, 'I am not a detective at all. I have come to open an account. I intend to keep all my money in this bank.'

The manager looked relieved, but still serious; he concluded now that I was a son of Baron Rothschild or a young Gould.

'A large account, I suppose,' he said.

'Fairly large,' I whispered. 'I propose to deposit fifty-six dollars now and fifty dollars a month regularly.'

The manager got up and opened the door. He called to the accountant.

'Mr. Montgomery,' he said unkindly loud, 'this gentleman is opening an account, he will deposit fifty-six dollars. Good morning.'

I rose.

A big iron door stood open at the side of the room.

'Good morning,' I said, and stepped into the safe.

'Come out,' said the manager coldly, and showed me the other way.

I went up to the accountant's wicket and poked the ball of money at him with a quick convulsive movement as if I were doing a conjuring trick.

My face was ghastly pale.

'Here,' I said, 'deposit it.' The tone of the words seemed to mean, 'Let us do this painful thing while the fit is on us.'

He took the money and gave it to another clerk.

He made me write the sum on a slip and sign my name in a book. I no longer knew what I was doing. The bank swam before my eyes.

'Is it deposited?' I asked in a hollow, vibrating voice.

'It is,' said the accountant.

'Then I want to draw a check.'

My idea was to draw out six dollars of it for present use. Someone gave me a check-book through a wicket and someone else began telling me how to write it out. The people in the bank had the impression that I was an invalid millionaire. I wrote something on the check and thrust it in at the clerk. He looked at it.

'What! are you drawing it all out again?' he asked in surprise. Then I realized that I had written fifty-six instead of six. I was too far gone to reason now. I had a feeling that it was impossible to explain the thing. All the clerks had stopped writing to look at me.

Reckless with misery, I made a plunge.

'Yes, the whole thing.'

'You withdraw your money from the bank?'

'Every cent of it.'

'Are you not going to deposit any more?' said the clerk, astonished.

'Never.'

An idiot hope struck me that they might think something had insulted me while I was writing the check and that I had changed my mind. I made a wretched attempt to look like a man with a fearfully quick temper.

The clerk prepared to pay the money.

'How will you have it?' he said.

'What?'

'How will you have it?'

'Oh'—I caught his meaning and answered without even trying to think—'in fifties.'

He gave me a fifty-dollar bill.

'And the six?' he asked dryly.

'In sixes,' I said.

He gave it me and I rushed out.

As the big door swung behind me, I caught the echo of a roar of laughter that went up to the ceiling of the bank. Since then I bank no more. I keep my money in cash in my trousers pocket and my savings in silver dollars in a sock.

THE ROMANCE OF DIGESTION

Robert Benchley

WHEN YOU TAKE a bite of that delicious cookie, or swallow a morsel of that nourishing bread, do you stop to think of the marvelous and intricate process by means of which Mother Nature is going to convert it into bone and sinew and roses for those pretty cheeks? Probably not, and it is just as well. For if you did stop to think of it at that time, you would unquestionably not be able to digest that cookie—or that nourishing bread.

But whether you think of it or not, this exciting process of digestion is going on, day in and day out, sometimes pretty badly, but always with a great show of efficiency. It is, on the whole, probably one of the worst-done jobs in the world.

First you must know that those hard, white edges of bone which you must have noticed hundreds of times along the

front of your mouth are 'teeth,' and are put there for a very definite purpose. They are the ivory gates to the body. They are Nature's tiny sentinels, and if you have ever bitten yourself, you will know how sharp they can be, and what efficient little watchmen they are. Just you try to slip your finger into your mouth without your teeth's permission, and see how far you get. Or try to get it out, once they have captured it.

Now these thousands of brave little soldiers, the teeth, which we have in our mouths, take the food as it comes through the air (in case you are snapping at a butterfly) or from the fork, and separate it into its component parts (air, land, and water). In this process, the teeth are aided by the tongue, which is that awful-looking thing right back of your teeth. Don't look at it!

The tongue (which we may call the escalator of the mouth, or Nature's nobleman, for short) and the teeth toss the food back and forth between them until there is nothing left of it, except the little bones which you have to take out between your thumb and forefinger and lay on your butter-plate. In doing this, be careful that the bone is really on the butter-plate and that it does not stick to your finger so that you put it back into your mouth again on the next trip, for this would make the little white sentries very angry and they might all drop out.

And now comes the really wonderful part of the romance which is being enacted right there under your very eyes. A chemical reaction on the tongue presses a little button which telegraphs down, down, down, 'way down to the cross old Stomach, and says: 'Please, sir, do you want this food or don't you?' And the Stomach, whom we shall call 'Prince Charming' from now on, telegraphs (or more likely writes) back: 'Yes, dear!' or 'You can do what you like with it for all of me.' Just as he happens to feel at the time.

And then, such a hurry and bustle as goes on in the mouth! 'Foodie's going to visit Stomach!' all the little teeth cry, and rush about for all the world as if they were going themselves. 'All aboard, all aboard!' calls out the tongue, and there is a great ringing of bells and blowing of whistles and bumping of porters and in the midst of it all, the remnants of that delicious cookie seated nervously on the tongue, ready to be taken down on its first journey alone, down to see Prince Charming. For all the joyousness of the occasion, it is a little sad, too. For that bit of cookie is going to get some terribly tough treatment before it is through.

The food is then placed on a conveyor, by means of which it is taken to the Drying Room, situated on the third floor, where it is taken apart and washed and dried, preparatory to going through the pressing machines. These pressing machines are operated by one man, who stands by the conveyor as it brings the food along and tosses it into the vats. Here all rocks and moss are drawn off by mechanical pickers and the food subjected to treatment in a solution of sulphite, a secret process which is jealously guarded. From here the food is taken to the Playroom where it plays around awhile with the other children until it is time for it to be folded by the girls in the bindery, packed into neat stacks, and wrapped for shipment in bundles of fifty. Some of these bundles, the proteins, are shipped to the bones of the body, others, the hydrates, go to making muscle, while a third class, the sophomores, contribute to making fatty tissue which nobody wants—that is, not if he has any pride at all about his appearance. The by-products are made into milk-bottle caps, emery wheels, and insurance calendars, and are sold at cost.

Thus we see how wonderfully Nature takes care of us and our little troubles, aided only by soda-mint and bicarbonate.

THE LION IS BUSY¹

Corey Ford

SIMBA!

Surely the very word can strike cold terror into the heart of any African explorer! The King of Beasts, with his terrible knife-like claws and eight murderous teeth, alone accounts for the horror and dread men have always felt toward the 'Dark Continent.' Travelers may report hair-raising experiences in the jungle with the gorilla or the rhino; but none of these other familiar features of the travel-books can ever surpass Africa's classic reputation for *lion*—a reputation, incidentally, which is shared by most of the travel-books themselves.

For centuries this cruel and merciless assassin has roamed the forest and veldt of Africa, marauding helpless native villages and devouring his prey. And for centuries man has hunted him down in the jungle, shot him to death with rifles, photographed him to death with cameras, talked him to death in lectures, or written him to death in autobiographies. Among travel-books of late, to be sure, there has been a slight tendency away from lions in favor of witchcraft and phallic worship,² and certain critics have even gone so far as to predict that the lion has lost his punch; but I for one am certain this slump is only temporary, and the lion at bottom is fun-

¹From *Coconut Oil, June Triplett's Amazing Book out of Darkest Africa*.

²In his recent report upon Africa, for example, Mr. William Seabrook breaks all travel-book records by failing to mention the lion once. He was subsequently barred from the African Explorers' Union.

damentally sound. The King of Beasts is good for a lot of space yet. As old Horace Greeley was wont to murmur: 'A lion eating a man is nothing; but whenever you see a man-eating lion—*that's news!*'

Certainly the lion is a treacherous and a ruthless foe. When one of them has been wounded, for example, the perfidious creature will often veer traitorously and seek to wound his pursuer. More than one big-game hunter has put a dozen bullets into various sensitive parts of a lion's anatomy, only to see the savage and uncivilized beast turn on him, Judas-like, and attack him with demoniacal cruelty. And any explorer who has returned from *safari* with a proud bag of fifteen or twenty lions, lionesses and tiny cubs will doubtless bear witness to the fact that the lion is a cruel assassin and killer, who shows little or no mercy.

All these facts raced through my mind now as I halted terror-stricken in the jungle trail, and faced the huge killer that crouched menacingly before me, his tail waving ominously and his hungry jaws dripping with foam. In a flash I recalled hair-raising tales of explorers who had been torn limb from limb by infuriated lions, of terrified natives who had been dragged to their doom in the teeth of these savage beasts, of the thousand and one narrow escapes I had read about in the legends under rotogravure photographs. For a moment I was tempted to flee; but I controlled this weak impulse, and steadied my shaking knees. After all, duty must come first! I had my Public to consider.

'Chester,' I called to my cowering camera-man, who stood behind me trembling like an aspen leaf, 'get your camera ready. We must get a picture!'

'Do you suppose he will charge us?' gasped Chester weakly.

'No, all the pictures in Africa are free,' contributed old Britches, who, no doubt, felt that his little jape would relieve the nervous tension of the moment; but I saw the lion

wince and scowl slightly at Britches, and make a mental note.

Scarcely daring to breathe, poor Chester leveled his camera and adjusted the lens. The savage lion crouched not twenty feet from us, his muscles tensed to spring, his eyes glazed, his tail stiffened behind him. Amid a death-like silence, Chester pressed the bulb. At the click of the shutter, the lion uttered a whinny of rage and hurtled toward me through the air.

'Stop!' cried Chester, in the nick of time.

'What is it?' I gasped.

'We've got to take it over again,' Chester explained between chattering teeth. 'I had my thumb over the lens.'

With a perceptible frown of annoyance, the lion backed with rather poor grace to the spot he had previously occupied, twenty feet away, tensed his muscles again, glazed his eyes, and stiffened his tail behind him. Chester peered into the finder, and motioned slightly with his hand.

'A little farther over to the right, please,' he said. 'I don't seem to get in all your feet.'

Growling ominously to himself, the lion side-stepped a little, and crouched again, his red-rimmed eyes fixed on the camera. Chester meantime was twisting the lens and frowning.

'I wonder if you would mind going up and holding a lighted match beside his head, Miss Triplett,' he whispered to me. 'I just can't get the focus.'

I did as he suggested. At last Chester looked up with a bright smile.

'All ready,' he said.

I took my place in the trail.

'All ready?' I said.

Chester nodded. The lion crouched with tense muscles, his eyes glazed, his tail stiffened behind him. Suddenly Chester held up his hand.

'Hold it!' he said. 'The sun has just gone behind a cloud.'

'Oh, for Christ's sake!' muttered the lion out of the corner of his mouth, still keeping his eyes fixed rigidly on the camera.

'That's the trouble with this outdoor photography,' complained Chester bitterly. 'You never can tell about the weather.'

'Maybe it would be better if we tried it some other day,' I suggested.

'It seems too bad, after everything's ready,' said Britches.

'It would be all right if I had one of those incandescent flashlight bulbs,' sighed Chester. 'They make flashlight bulbs now that will photograph——'

'Say, do something, will you?' muttered the lion in a choked voice, without moving his lips. 'I can't hold this tail out stiff much longer.'

'Oh, that's all right,' laughed Chester easily. 'You can rest while we're waiting.'

'Why didn't you say so?' grumbled the lion, sinking down on the trail with a sigh of relief.

This little delay meantime had given me time to collect my wits; and during the past few moments I had been thinking rapidly. I knew that I was in a tough spot, and I realized that only my quick presence of mind could save, not merely myself, but perhaps my entire expedition. I glanced covertly at the lion, who was engaged at the moment in smoothing his mane, and then I leaned over and whispered to Britches.

'I have a plan,' I said in a low voice, 'to rescue us all from this tough spot. I am going to try the oldest known method of demonstrating man's superiority over the lion.'

'You're not going to put your head in his mouth?' uttered Britches, aghast.

I shook my head. 'I have a better plan than that,' I explained. 'I have read about the power of the human eye to

control a savage beast *and now I am going to attempt to stare this brute down.*

'Oh, no, you're not, June,' said old Britches determinedly. 'It's entirely too risky, I've promised your father I'd take care of you, and I absolutely forbid you to——'

'Oh, yes, I am,' I interrupted, gazing at him calmly.

For a moment old Britches met my stare determinedly; then his glance quavered, and at last he lowered his eyes, and mopped his forehead. 'Go ahead, June,' he murmured weakly, 'and God help the lion.'

With this assurance, I shook hands solemnly with old Britches and Chester, unstrapped my revolvers, laid them on the ground, and walked forward alone, unarmed, to face the crouching beast of prey.

As I approached the lion, my eyes fixed steadily on his, he rose slightly and his mane bristled. Warningly he emitted a deep-seated and ominous roar. Still I came on without faltering. The lion held his ground, staring back at me, and lashing his tail angrily from side to side as he growled again menacingly: 'Ahr-r-uffff!'

Still I drew nearer, my eyes never wavering. The muscles in his powerful shoulders bunched dangerously, and he slowly lowered his hind-quarters as if to charge. Not once did I take my gaze from his face.

Now my eyes were almost on a level with his own deep-set cruel ones, and I could feel his hot breath on my face. I knelt before him, amid a dead silence, and commenced to stare at him steadily. He stared back.

Moments passed like centuries. I did not budge a muscle, and the lion stood silent likewise. Our eyes were scarcely a foot apart, and I was looking directly into the narrowed pupils before me. He returned the gaze defiantly. The crucial test was at hand.

Now, as I looked him squarely in the eye, for the first time

I saw his eyes blink and quaver. He seemed to try to look away; but my hypnotic gaze apparently held him, and he stared back at me a little uneasily. My own eyes watered and stung, but I did not falter.

Gradually a change came over the face of the lion before me. The defiant expression on his face faded, and a haunting fear crept into the back of his eye. He began to fidget and shift from one foot to another, as I stared, and slowly a cold perspiration broke out on his brow.

Still I fixed him with my eye. Now the look of fear increased to an expression of acute terror, and he began to tremble from head to foot. The sweat ran down his forehead in streams. He made little choking sounds in his throat, his mouth twitched convulsively as he sought to control his rising panic, and his face was wrenched with guilt. Suddenly he cracked.

'All right—I'll tell!' he shrieked in an hysterical scream. 'I'm glad I killed her! She was a brute. I strangled her with a curtain-cord and took the papers out of the safe—I didn't know what I was doing—only, for God's sake, don't let little Elsie know—for God's sake—for God's sake——' And he broke down utterly and buried his great head in his paws, and lay there in the trail shaking with racking sobs.

'It's all right, old man,' I said to him gently, laying my hand sympathetically on his quavering back. 'We're not going to harm you. We just want to get some photographs of lions, that's all, for our travel-book.'

'You won't——?' He lifted his tear-stained face and stared at me wonderingly. 'You mean——?' Suddenly a great sob of relief burst from him. 'Oh, God bless you, ma'am!' he cried, raising the hem of my skirt and pressing it gratefully to his lips. 'God bless you!' And with a cry of joy he bounded up and loped happily into the deep jungle—a happy and, I trust, a better lion, for the bitter lesson he had learned.

DUDELSACKPFEIFER

Frank Sullivan

I HAVE a friend named Clementine who has the occasional use of a box at the opera in what is now referred to as the Rhinestone Horseshoe. She took me there one afternoon recently.

'What's the opera?' I asked. "'Tosca"?''

'No,' said Clementine.

'What!' I exclaimed. 'No "'Tosca"!'

I hate to break in a new opera. I always go to 'Tosca.' For me, all opera is 'Tosca,' and 'Tosca' is all opera.

'It's about time you heard a new one,' said Clementine. 'You can't go on hearing "'Tosca" all your life.'

'"'Tosca" was good enough for my grandfather,' I retorted, with quiet dignity.

'Don't be such an old Tory,' said Clementine. 'Keep quiet and listen. Improve your mind.'

'Lily-painter,' I admonished my *vis-à-vis*, gently. 'All right, Clementine, I'll stay. But I warn you. No matter what opera it is, it will be "'Tosca" to me. By the way, what opera *is* it?'

'It's called "Schwanda, der Dudelsackpfeifer."'

'I beg your pardon?'

'"Schwanda, der Dudelsackpfeifer."'

'Der what?'

'Der Dudelsackpfeifer. Dudelsackpfeifer. German for bagpipe-player.'

'Oh.'

I lapsed into silence for a moment. Then:

'Clementine.'

'Yes.'

'What's the name of the opera again?'

'"Schwanda, der Dudelsackpfeifer."'

'Not "Tosca"?'

'No, not "Tosca."'

'You're sure?'

'Certainly I'm sure.'

'Thank you, Clementine.'

I went into a brown study.

Dudelsackpfeifer. Dudelsackpfeifer. Dudelsackpfeifer. I found myself, fascinated, repeating it over and over. But no, that way lay madness. I tried to get a grip on myself.

'Tosca,' I muttered, clenching my hands and setting my jaw, 'Tosca, Tosca, Tosca. . . . Tosca. . . . Toscapfeifer.'

Good God!

But it couldn't be. There must be some mistake. I plucked timidly, hopefully, at Clementine's sleeve.

'Tell me it's a joke, Clementine. Tell me it's a hoax. Tell me it's not Dudelsackpfeifer.'

'Will you hush *up!*' commanded the irritated Clementine, for Mr. Bodanzky had appeared and with a fillip of his hand had started the overture.

I sank back in my chair and crouched there, brooding. Dudelsackpfeifer. Dudelsackpfeifer. Dudelsackpfeifer. The cursed refrain kept marching through my brain. I felt powerless to stop it. On and on it swept, mighty, irresistible, overwhelming.

Suddenly I could bear it no longer. With a low moan of terror I burst from the box. In the foyer I found a maid. I clutched her, as a drowning man clutches a straw.

'Tell me,' I implored, 'tell me, Straw, the name of this opera. Be frank. Don't spare me. Tell me the truth.'

'It's "Schwanda, der Dudelsackpfeifer,"' said she.

I thrust her from me in horror, and turned, to find a distinguished-looking gentleman in a Windsor tie. It was a Mr. Guard. I rummaged about in his tie until I had a good grasp, and clung to him.

'Tell me,' I begged of him, 'tell me it's not——'

'It's "Schwanda, der Dudelsackpfeifer,"' said he, curtly disengaging two or three feet of his tie from my rumpling clutch.

I gave an involuntary shriek of despair. Mr. Guard placed a warning finger upon his lips and pointed sternly to a sign. The sign said: 'No Shrieking Allowed Off the Stage.'

A shaking, shuddering wreck, I crept back into the box and dropped despondently into my seat behind Clementine.

Dudelsackpfeifer. Dudelsackpfeifer. Dudelsackpfeifer. I made no further attempt at resistance. I sighed and resigned myself to the worst.

Then a curious thing happened. I began to feel better. I began to have a giddy sense of elation, a queer, febrile sense of gaiety. Suddenly, in obedience to an impulse which seemed to me logical at the time, I leaned over and gave Clementine a push which sent her opera glasses clattering to the floor.

'Clementine,' I told her, jovially, 'you're a Dudelsackpfeifer.'

'Sh-h-h-h-h!' hissed the thoroughly ruffled Clementine. Dowagers glared. From a box not far distant came the low, ominous growl of an indignant Goelet.

I didn't care. Nothing mattered. Let 'em glare. I'd fight any twenty Goelets. I felt free, gloriously free. I was Frank, the Dudelsackpfeifer.

Obedying another impulse, I rose in the box and cleared my throat. Clementine took one look at me, hastily gathered up her things, and slid out of the box. Then I addressed the gathering, in a glad, cheery voice.

'Schwanda, der Dudelsackpfeifer,' I said. 'Tosca, der Dudelsackpfeifer.'

I warmed to my subject.

'*Toscanini*, der Dudelsackpfeifer. Bodanzky, der Dudelsackpfeifer. Jeritza, der Dudelsackpfeifer. Edward Johnson, der Dudelsackpfeifer.'

I now had the attention of practically the entire opera house. It spurred me on to heights of oratory I never dreamed I could reach.

'Gatti, der Dudelsackpfeifer. Herbert Hoover, der Dudelsackpfeifer. Mrs. Vanderbilt, der Dudels—'

I felt a touch on my shoulder. I turned, to behold a gentleman standing behind me.

'Come,' he said, soothingly. 'You need a rest.'

'Who are you?'

'I'm the house Dudel—I mean the house doctor. Come.'

But suddenly the floor came up to my chin and I knew no more.

I'm all right now. I'm my old self. But that doctor who tried to cure me—you should see him. Paces his cell night and day, poor chap, moaning 'Dudelsackpfeifer, Dudelsackpfeifer, Dudelsackpfeifer.'

GENEALOGICAL REFLECTION

Ogden Nash

No McTavish
Was ever lavish.

GENDARMES AND THE MAN

Donald Moffat

ROSY was a second-hand Renault of eleven horsepower, a nice friendly machine, partly covered with second-hand paint and adorned with a high tonneau or bustle, like the poop of a gal-
leon. Although really quite fond of Rosy, Mr. Mott, a sensi-
tive man, didn't quite like to leave her hanging round out-
side the Hotel Crillon, as he felt that the contrast between
her out-moded raiment and that of her smartly dressed sis-
ters might cause her (and him) mental anguish. She was per-
fectly at home in front of Mr. Mott's own hôtel, however,
and was undeniably an object of pride to Pierre, the com-
bined valet, concierge, and chasseur, who loved to stand out-
side in his striped apron and felt slippers, with one hand rest-
ing affectionately on the fender, and open the door for the
Motts and smile them out of sight.

Mr. Mott's first act after taking Rosy over from an Eng-
lishman named Wrightstoneham, her most recent protector,
was to drive her the two blocks from her little *rez-de-chaus-
sée*, or garage, to the hôtel, proudly honking the squeaky lit-
tle horn all the way like a real Parisian. There he left her by
the sidewalk, and went upstairs for as long as it takes a man
to recite 'The Wreck of the Hesperus,' and came down again
with a song on his lips and a bright smile for Célie, known
in the hôtel as the maid-of-all-work because she did all the
work. '*Monsieur va faire un petit tour?*' Ah-ha! Wasn't he
just—and monsieur skipped out the door.

And immediately ceased being Monsieur.

A sinister figure in blue and red was leaning over Rosy. In his hand was a notebook, and he was moistening a pencil at his lips. Rosy looked furtive, as if this sort of thing had happened to her before, *en faisant le trottoir*.

Mr. Mott murmured: 'What is it that it has, Mr. the Agent? She is to me, the carriage.'

He turned his attention from Rosy. 'Ha!' he stated. 'She is to you, the carriage. Then!' Mr. Mott thought he had seldom seen a more unpleasant face.

'One has, maybe, committed a fault of which one is ignorant?'

'Evidently!'

'May one be permitted to inquire the nature of this fault?'

'Ha!' stated the gendarme again. 'One has placed the carriage at the bad side of the street; see you, how can other carriages circulate in these old ways so contracted? Thus, if all the world pleases but himself without consideration of no matter what other voyagers, what *tohubohu* does not then arrive, by example?'

Mr. Mott brightened. 'But yesterday,' he said, 'I observed the carriage of the merchant of wine and carbon at the same side, here.' A mistake.

'Yesterday! But yesterday is not today, figure to yourself.'

Mr. Mott bowed, with dignity.

'Show me then the gray card,' the gendarme demanded sternly.

Mr. Mott unbuckled his portfolio of licenses and dealt a hand from the top of the deck. The gendarme sorted them skillfully and discarded onto the front seat, keeping only the gray registration card and the pink driving license. He read them attentively, then looked at the nickel plaque on Rosy's instrument board, which the law requires to be inscribed with the owner's name and address, and gave a sudden start.

'Then!' he thundered, pointing dramatically to the plaque.

'The name on the gray card is not in rapport with the one on the plaque, evidently! That is your name engraved on the dashboard.' And so it came about that Mr. Mott was known as Monsieur Vrrigstonhonh throughout the subsequent proceedings.

Mr. Mott tried to deny it, with some confidence at first. 'But no, monsieur. That is the name of the old proprietor. I am the proprietor since fifteen days, and was even now on road to the graver for my proper plaque, already commanded.'

'Make no histories,' the gendarme ordered darkly. 'I can read, I.'

At this point the investigating committee was swelled by the arrival of a bicycle bearing another and more potent gendarme, and on his heels a little group consisting of a stubby patriarch with a long yellow beard, part of a bowler hat, and one half of a pair of suspenders; an old and respectable female in black, with a figure, who had been washing out a bit of flannel in the fresh current of the gutter; and a man-child with long bare legs, a downy beard, and serious tonsil trouble.

The committee rose long enough for the ranking gendarme to suggest politely to this trio that possibly it had, then, other affairs to claim its attention than breathing on the foreign sir, a suggestion for which the prisoner was grateful. They drifted on a few yards, and the committee took up the minutes.

Mr. Mott's man said: 'The carriage of this sir rests, evidently, at the bad side of the street. He pretends, too, that the carriage is to him, when see you, my sergeant, the name of another, a Monsieur Mott, is inscribed on the gray card.'

The true owner of the name opened his mouth to take exception to this use of the word 'pretend,' but was interrupted by the sergeant, a tall, lean man with an apoplectic face who, like all his rank, believed in action: 'Get the hell

over there on the other side of the street where you belong, then we'll take up the paper work,' and Mr. Mott, glad of something to do besides being talked at, sprang in, started the motor, and in order to turn round as quickly as possible, backed Rosy up.

Instantly he heard a gentle crashing, crumpling sound from behind, then two bellows, or screams, one hoarse and low, the other shrill and vibrant, which Mr. Mott traced quickly to the two gendarmes. He stopped and looked over the side, more in curiosity than apprehension . . .

A bicycle had been left leaning against the curb behind Rosy.

One had backed Rosy over the bicycle.

To whom was the bicycle?

The bicycle was to the tall gendarme with the hoarse voice.

What says the tall gendarme?

The words of the tall gendarme would have no meaning except to another Frenchman.

The tall gendarme angers himself of it, *hein?*

Yes, he angers himself of it formidably.

And the companion of the tall one, he, too, has choler not badly.

For the bicycle of the tall gendarme lies by the ground, riven by the foreign sir.

Eventually the filibuster, with gestures, began to simmer down, and Mr. Mott began to get his first tips on Paris traffic regulations; he learned, for instance, about the crime of backing up, with or without destruction of police bicycles. And there was something mysterious and obviously childish said about parking on the odd and even sides of the street, to the undisguised interest of the little group of assorted bystanders who had, it was apparent, nothing better to do that day after all than to breathe upon the foreign sir.

The gendarmes collared all Mr. Mott's documents, told him to follow in the car, and started to walk away, carrying the injured bicycle. This brought up what Mr. Mott considered a nice point of behavior.

He bleated: 'How, then, is one to follow, since it is forbidden to recoil and the way is too narrow to make a turn?'

'Drive round the block,' they snarled over their shoulders, as who should say: Go take a running dive off the Eiffel Tower. 'One awaits your return here.'

Rosy and Mr. Mott obediently scuttled off down the street, took their first left, and instantly heard a whistle. They stopped, shuddering with emotion. A stout gendarme with a red beard and pince-nez was approaching with deliberate tread. He leaned affectionately over Rosy's shoulder.

'Attend, my little,' he said indulgently. 'Is it that one knows not how to read?' He pointed to a red disk high up on the corner building: '*Sens interdit*.'—One-way Street.

'My God!' thought Mr. Mott.

The gendarme said: 'Let me see your gray card.'

'Mr. the Agent,' Mr. Mott replied, 'I come from being arrested by two other agents of high rank who have taken all my papers and even now await my return from this voyage round the block. I now find that it is forbidden to advance further; nor can I retreat, as that, too, is forbidden. Must one then rest here forever, a mute inglorious warning to all other foreign conductors?'

The gendarme roared with dignified laughter. 'Recoil, then, my old,' adding to himself, Mr. Mott felt sure, 'and may Heaven protect thee.'

Mr. Mott backed up, or recoiled, while the gendarme held up three swiftly converging streams of taxis whose drivers honked their horns and bellowed personal remarks, and drove slowly back to his original captors. They were looking suggestively at their watches.

Mr. Mott followed them round the corner to the police station and left Rosy behind a taxi which Heaven had sent to be his guide in the still mysterious matter of parking. He entered the building and, closely attended by his guards, approached the desk. A squat man with one evil eye and a face slashed with old scars examined his papers and listened to the sergeant's story of his crimes. When the commissioner asked him his true name, then, he rashly reached across the desk to point it out on the gray card which the commissioner held in his hand. This proved to be an error. The commissioner shouted 'Halte!' snatched the card away, and glared. The gendarmes each seized one of Mr. Mott's arms, and glared; a huge black cat that had been sleeping quietly on the desk sprang to its feet, humped its back, glared, *and* spat at him. Mr. Mott waited, in terror, to be searched for arms.

Finally, after a prolonged discussion in which he took no part, as his French had utterly deserted him in the stress of emotion, Mr. Mott's true identity was established with the help of his passport, it was decided that he had an honest face, that very likely he had not actually stolen the car, and that he might be treated with indulgence on account of his ignorance of the ways of a civilized country. The parking mystery was not further explained. Nor was any mention made of the smashed bicycle. Mr. Mott learned why in the corridor outside, when the owner whispered that he had not mentioned it to the commissioner because he counted on Mr. Mott to make private reparation, and that fifty francs would be just about the right amount.

Mr. Mott paid the fifty francs, and after shaking hands all round they parted, the gendarmes on their wheels—the damage to the bicycle had apparently been exaggerated—and Mr. Mott to return Rosy temporarily to her garage, draw a deep breath or two, and hasten for something to restore his injured nerve tissues at the nearest café—a rather pleasant fea-

ture of Paris life which I won't go into just now because I think something has already been written on the subject.

THE CRAZY FOOL

Donald Ogden Stewart

THE twelve-forty-five left at twelve-forty-five. 'We're off!' cried Charlie, with all the eager, excited assurance of eternal Youth in the face of the Great Adventure. The old gentleman only smiled—the wise smile of Age—Age mellowed and saddened by Experience.

Five minutes later, Charlie again looked out of the window.

'If I'm not too inquisitive,' he said, 'may I ask a question?'

'My name is King,' said the old gentleman, 'Horace King. You may ask me anything.'

'Well, in the first place,' said Charlie, 'isn't that the same man out there we saw back at the station?'

Mr. King looked out.

'Yes,' he said, 'I believe it is.'

Charlie took out an envelope and did some figuring on the back.

'Well, then,' he said, at last, 'either he is moving—or we're not.'

'I'll ask him,' said the old gentleman affably, and he tried to raise the window.

'Here, I'll help you,' said Charlie, and together they succeeded in getting their hands very dirty.

'It won't raise,' said Charlie.

'Ah, my boy,' said the old man patiently, 'maybe it's *us* who won't *lower*. Did you ever stop to think of that?'

'No,' replied Charlie, so he and the old man lowered.

'Maybe if I had a diamond,' said Mr. King, 'I could cut a hole in the glass and get out.'

Just then an employee in overalls walked through the car, carrying a pail and a mop.

'I beg your pardon,' said Mr. King, 'but have you a diamond?'

The man stared dumbly.

'*Pardonnez-moi,*' said Charlie quickly, '*mais est-ce que vous avez une diamant . . .*'

'It's masculine, I think,' said Mr. King.

'Isn't he, though!' said Charlie. 'And what a mustache!'

'I meant the word,' explained Mr. King; '*diamant*—it's "*un diamant,*" if I'm not too mistaken.'

'*Un diamant,*' repeated Charlie to the man, but with no better result.

'*Bitte,*' began Mr. King. '*Haben Sie vielleicht . . .*'

The man turned and left the car.

'In my time,' said Mr. King, 'employees were taught courtesy.'

'And French and dancing,' said Charlie. 'And ladies were ladies and did the gavotte,' and he pretended to execute a few quaint steps in the aisle. 'Will you join me?'

'Ah, me,' sighed Mr. King. 'The good old days.'

'Maybe,' said Charlie, 'if we don't let the window know we are trying to open it, we can catch it unawares.'

'All right,' said Mr. King, and they sat down and pretended to go to sleep. Suddenly Charlie leaped up and grabbed the window and after a tremendous struggle forced it open.

'See!' he said triumphantly, 'I told you.'

Mr. King, however, still had his eyes closed and did not answer.

'That's a wonderful piece of acting,' said Charlie, and he

held a mirror in front of Mr. King's mouth to see if by any chance he were dead.

Mr. King soon opened his eyes and looked out the window.

'That's that same man,' he said, somewhat petulantly. 'I wish he would go away'—and he called to the man.

'I beg your pardon,' he said, 'but can you tell me what station this is?'

'New York,' replied the man.

'New York,' repeated Mr. King, with a puzzled look. 'I see. Thank you.'

He turned to Charlie. 'We left New York at twelve-forty-five,' he said.

'I know it,' said Charlie. 'I was there,' and he turned to the man. 'We left New York at twelve-forty-five,' he said.

'Did you?' replied the man.

'Yes, we "did you,"' said Charlie, somewhat irritated.

'Careful,' said Mr. King. 'Let me talk to him. Are you sure,' he said presently, 'that this is New York? Are you acquainted here?'

The man put his fingers to his mouth and whistled shrilly. 'Hey, Bill!' he called.

Bill came, wiping his hands on a piece of waste.

'Here's a couple of guys,' said the man, 'want to know if this is New York.'

Bill looked at Charlie and Mr. King, then tossed the waste onto the next track.

'Come on, Eddie,' he said. 'We've got to finish that truck on thirteen.'

Bill and Eddie left to finish the truck on thirteen. Charlie looked at Mr. King. Then they picked up their baggage and walked out of the car by the front end.

'I guess they didn't take this car,' said Charlie, somewhat crestfallen.

'You'll learn, my boy,' said Mr. King wisely, 'not to count on anything.'

Charlie was looking through a time-table.

'That's not the right railroad,' said Mr. King.

'I know it,' said Charlie, 'but it's the only time-table I've ever had. We were Southerners,' he added, 'and proud.'

'Time-tables are like women,' said Mr. King. 'The more you something or other them, the more they—I forget the exact words.'

'How's the tune go?' asked Charlie. 'Maybe I can help you out.'

'There used to be a two-thirteen,' said Mr. King, 'but I can't remember where it was a two-thirteen from. My memory is getting worse every day.'

'New York?' suggested Charles. 'Chicago?'

'Maybe,' replied Mr. King. 'Anyway, we can ask. It never does any harm to ask, my boy.'

So they picked up their bags and walked back through the gate to the Information Bureau.

'Is there a two-thirteen?' asked Mr. King politely, but the information man was talking on the telephone and did not answer.

'It's your turn to ask a question now,' said Mr. King to Charlie when the man had finished. So Charlie asked a question.

The man reached under the counter, handed Charlie a purple time-table and answered a call on another telephone.

'Now I'll ask one,' said Mr. King, so the next time the man seemed to be free, Mr. King asked one.

'What great English statesman,' he began, 'is sometimes referred to as——'

Mr. King was handed a time-table—a red-and-black one.

'Dear, dear,' he said. 'We don't seem to be getting anywhere. And it gets dark early around here, too.'

'It's the fault of our colleges,' said Charlie. 'College graduates don't know anything.'

'When I was at college,' said Mr. King, 'a young man had to work,' and he glared at the smooth-faced youngster behind the counter.

'I tell you what,' suggested Charlie. 'Let's get all the time-tables and go over in a corner and look for a two-thirteen—and the first one who finds it can sit next the window all the way.'

So, with a little patience, they collected a large assortment of time-tables and retired to a cold marble bench on which Mr. King spread out a newspaper before he sat down.

'You'll understand,' he explained to Charlie, 'when you're older.'

'Oh, go on, tell me now,' said Charlie, but Mr. King wisely refused.

'Here's a two-thirteen!' he cried, 'I get the seat.'

'Let's see,' said Charlie. 'The only trouble is,' he said, 'that that train goes to St. Louis.'

'I've been to St. Louis,' said Mr. King. 'I was there in '84—no, '85—I can remember just as well. We got there about two in the afternoon—phew, wasn't it hot—and I kept saying——'

'Here's a train,' interrupted Charlie, 'which might do.'

'You mustn't hesitate to interrupt me,' said Mr. King, 'any time. I'm old and I get to talking and I know it doesn't interest anyone, so don't you hesitate to cut right in. So that afternoon in St. Louis, I kept saying, "My, but I wish it would rain," and the man I was with, John Bradshaw——'

'Do you think this is our train?' asked Charlie, holding up the time-table.

'That's right—you just interrupt whenever you want,' said Mr. King. 'Well, John Bradshaw—he was from Cleveland, then, although he came originally from Albany and I had

known him for several years—oh, ever since he and I were youngsters——’

‘All I want to know is,’ asked Charlie, ‘if you think this is our train,’ and he pointed to a column on the forty-second page.

‘That’s what I like to see,’ said Mr. King, taking out his spectacles, ‘a young man who isn’t afraid to ask questions. So John Bradshaw said, “I bet it doesn’t rain before night,” and I said, “I bet it does”—and along about five-thirty, it began to look as if it might rain and, sure enough, just about six o’clock, it began to rain and it rained all night. Now, isn’t that about as dull a story as you ever heard?’

‘It’s pretty dull,’ said Charlie. ‘And yet it’s probably true.’

‘Well, as a matter of fact,’ said Mr. King, ‘it isn’t true. I never knew any John Bradshaw.’

‘Do you mean to say,’ asked Charlie, ‘that you made that all up out of your own head?’

Mr. King smiled. ‘Most of it,’ he said. ‘The part about the rain I got from watching rain.’

‘With an imagination like that,’ said Charlie, ‘you ought to write books.’

‘I wrote a book,’ said Mr. King.

‘I bet you did,’ said Charlie, ‘and I bet I’ve read it a hundred times without knowing it.’

‘The book’s not so bad,’ said Mr. King. ‘It’s got more of a plot.’

‘More of a plot than *what?*’ asked Charlie.

‘Than the story that I just told,’ replied Mr. King.

‘About John Bradshaw?’ asked Charlie.

‘Yes,’ replied the old man, ‘I told that story more or less just for the dialogue—and the character study.’

‘The dialogue was a knockout,’ said Charlie, ‘and that reminds me—I’m going over and find out the truth about our train.’

'The truth never hurt anyone,' said Mr. King.

'Now you sit right here,' said Charlie, 'and be quiet, and Charlie will be back as quick as you can say Jack Robinson.'

'Jack Robinson,' said Mr. King.

'You've got to shut your eyes,' said Charlie, 'and count up to a hundred.'

'But when I shut my eyes,' protested Mr. King, 'I go to sleep.'

'Not if you drink coffee,' said Charlie. 'I'll bring you some.'

'And a cheese sandwich,' added the old man, but Charlie had gone. So Mr. King shut his eyes and when Charlie came back, he was asleep.

'This is very discouraging,' said Charlie. 'I'll never make good and marry Judith if this nice old gentleman is going to go to sleep all the time,' and he woke Mr. King up by laying him flat on the bench, loosening his collar and working his arms up and down and backward and forward until artificial respiration began.

'Where am I?' asked Mr. King, opening his eyes.

'In St. Louis,' replied Charlie, 'and it is just beginning to rain and we'll have to hurry if we want to catch the two-thirteen. My name's Bradshaw.'

'Where's my cheese sandwich?' asked Mr. King.

'We haven't time,' replied Charlie.

'Time and tide——' began Mr. King, but Charlie picked up the bags and started for the gate.

'You promised me a cheese sandwich,' said Mr. King reproachfully, as he hurried along beside the young man.

'Later,' said Charlie.

'But I want it *now*,' said Mr. King.

'Later—Charlie said "*later*."'

'But——'

'Do you want Charlie to give you a good sock in the eye?'

Mr. King was silent, and they reached the gates.

'Have you got the tickets?' asked Charlie.

Mr. King began fumbling through his pockets.

'Maybe you swallowed them,' suggested the gatekeeper, sarcastically.

Mr. King stopped and considered.

'No,' he said at last, 'I don't think I did. That was a hat-check I swallowed.'

'He puts everything in his mouth,' explained Charlie.

'I was only kidding,' said the gateman. 'Hurry up.'

'Maybe they dropped down inside your trousers,' said Charlie. 'You might take them off and look.'

'You can't do that here,' warned the gatekeeper, instantly.

'Why not?' asked Charlie, looking around for a 'No-Taking-Off-of-Trousers' sign.

'Say, are you two trying to kid me?' asked the gateman.

'Dear me, no,' exclaimed Charlie. 'Not *you*.'

'Here they are,' said Mr. King. 'They were on my forehead all the time.' And after the tickets had been indignantly punched, they passed through the gates and on to the train.

'Are you sure this train stops at our station?' asked Charlie nervously, after the bags had been swung up into the rack. 'I can't afford to make any mistakes at the start.'

'There's only one way to be sure,' replied Mr. King, 'and that's the right way,' and so together they walked through the coach, out onto the platform, and up to where the engine was standing.

'That's quite an engine you've got there,' remarked Mr. King, looking up pleasantly at the engineer and resting one hand on the cab.

'Mustn't touch!' cautioned Charlie.

The engineer regarded Mr. King in silence.

'Yes, sir,' went on the old gentleman, 'that's certainly quite an engine.'

'Yeh?' said the engineer.

'Tell me,' said Mr. King—'and I don't want to seem inquisitive—but are you connected with this road?'

'I'm the engineer,' replied the other.

'Ah,' said Mr. King. 'I thought so. The engineer—well, well,' and he turned to Charlie with a smile. 'He says he's the engineer.'

Charlie raised his hat, deferentially.

'And this is certainly quite an engine,' went on Mr. King. 'Yes, sir—quite an engine. I suppose these engines go in and out of the station pretty regularly?'

There was no answer.

'I should imagine they did,' said Mr. King. 'Yes, sir—pretty regularly. On schedules, probably—or am I presuming too much?'

'They have regular schedules, if that's what you mean,' said the engineer.

'Well, now, that's very interesting,' said Mr. King, and he turned once more to Charlie. 'They have regular schedules, he says.'

'And I suppose,' went on Mr. King, 'that you have a perfectly definite list of places where you are expected to stop—of course, I'm not a railroad man in any sense of the word—but that is what I would suppose.'

There was no response from the cab.

'They tell me,' continued Mr. King, 'that one of these trains used to stop at a place called Lodge Junction—I think that was the name——'

'This train stops at Lodge Junction, if that's what you want to know,' said the engineer.

'Thank you,' said Mr. King. 'That's just what I wanted to know. Come, Charles,' and they walked triumphantly back to their seats.

'Yes, sir,' explained Mr. King. 'You can get anything you wish if you only go about it in the right way.'

'Well, I wish this train would start,' said Charlie, looking at his watch.

'It will,' said Mr. King, 'with time and patience,' and at that, the train gave a couple of tugs and started.

'See?' said Mr. King, smiling wisely at the impatient youth. 'When you're as old as I am——' But just then the train stopped suddenly with a jerk and Charlie's golf bag crashed down from the rack onto Mr. King's straw hat.

'I didn't need to have brought my extra putter,' said Charlie apologetically.

'That's perfectly all right,' said Mr. King, rubbing his head. 'That's what I get for being selfish. I should have given *you* that seat.'

For the first hour or so, Charlie and Mr. King gazed out of the window, more or less in silence.

'It's sort of an unusual place you're going to,' said Mr. King at last. 'The people may strike you as a little—well, different—but I think you'll learn to enjoy them.'

'If they're at all like you,' replied Charlie, 'I will.'

'Well, they're like me,' said Mr. King, pleased, 'and they're not—that's quite a paradox, isn't it?' he said. 'I'll have to remember that.'

Charlie leaned back in his seat and began to think about Judith.

'It must be great to be married,' he murmured, but Mr. King did not answer, so Charlie turned to the lady sitting alone across the aisle.

'It must be great to be married,' he said.

She was reading, but looked up with a smile. There was something unusual about her, too—and something quite interesting. Beautiful, well-dressed, veiled, and with a curious birdlike voice.

'It's terrible to be married,' she said, with a faint shrug of one small shoulder.

'Why, you're crazy,' replied Charlie. 'And, besides, you don't know Judith.'

'There are lots of people I don't know,' she said. 'I don't know you, for example.'

'I'm just old Charlie Hatch,' he explained. 'I was born in a log cabin and then I became a surveyor, and many stories are told about my honesty and my marksmanship, until one day I came across a copy of Shakespeare in the pocket of an old Indian chief and that made me want to go to college. So I walked twenty-one miles to the little old schoolhouse, but it wasn't there, and just then a kind old gentleman, driving by in his automobile, saw me splitting rails in my coonskin cap and asked me if this was the road to New York and I said, "No." "A bright lad," he said, turning to his wife, who was driving. "How would you like to go to college?" "Fine," I replied, so they laughed and drove on, and sometimes, as I sit around the fire with my wife and kiddies I think I am the happier, don't you?'

'I think you are very nice,' said the lady. 'And now I will tell you who I am. I was a poor little girl born in a tenement and my mother and father used to be drunk all the time and beat me so I grew up to be sweet and pure and beautiful and one day when the Prince of Wales knocked a polo ball into our alley he saw me and fell in love with me and married me and we lived happily ever after and now I think I shall return to my book,' and with another intriguing smile, she began to read and Charlie noticed that it was a French book written in French.

Suddenly, as though a thought had just come to her, she wrote something on a piece of paper, got up and walked past Charlie to the front of the car and out, and when Charlie looked down he saw that the slip of paper was in his lap.

'"There is a man in the third seat back of you,"' he read, "who has been annoying me. If he follows me out of the car,

and you are an American gentleman, you will take care of him for me.”’

‘Say, listen——’ said Charlie, but she had disappeared, so he slowly and cautiously turned around to look.

The gentleman in the third seat back of him was one of the largest men Charlie had ever seen. And as he looked, the fellow slowly got up out of his seat and started forward.

When he was opposite Charlie, Charlie stood up.

‘Take that, you cad,’ he said, and he aimed a blow at the man’s jaw, but missed.

‘Down where ah come from,’ said Charlie, ‘they string ’em up for less than that,’ and he swung, and missed again.

‘Say, listen,’ said Charlie. ‘How can I knock you down if you don’t hold still?’

‘All right,’ said the man, and he stood still and Charlie knocked him down.

‘Now *you* hold still,’ said the stranger, getting up, ‘and I’ll knock *you* down.’

‘What for?’ asked Charlie.

‘I don’t know,’ said the man. ‘I’ve never been down South,’ and with that he knocked Charlie down.

‘Now what do we do?’ he asked, picking Charlie up.

‘I don’t know,’ confessed Charlie. ‘How do you feel?’

‘My jaw hurts a little,’ said the man.

‘So does mine,’ said Charlie. ‘I tell you what—if you apologize to the lady, my honor will be satisfied.’

‘All right,’ said the man. ‘I’m sort of shy with ladies, though. Who is she?’

‘Why, don’t you know?’ and Charlie looked at the big man angrily.

‘No. I was just going up to get a drink of water,’ explained the man.

‘Well,’ said Charlie, ‘you want to be careful about that in the future.’

'Yes, sir,' said the man.

Charlie relented, held out his hand, and smiled. 'No hard feelings, stranger,' he said, and the two men shook hands.

'Now can I get my drink of water?' asked the man.

'You sure can,' said Charlie heartily, and so the stranger passed forward out of his life and so, apparently, had the interesting lady.

After the second hour, the train seemed to become considerable of a local—at least, it made a great many unnecessary stops for such a nice train, and Charlie impatiently woke Mr. King up and suggested that they go forward again and ask the engineer if there was anything they could do about it.

'He's probably just lonely,' said Charlie, as the train once more came to a halt. 'Or maybe it's his wind. Too many cigarettes are very harmful in excess.'

'Perhaps he ate something which didn't agree with him,' said Mr. King. 'I wonder what it could have been?'

'Egg plant,' suggested Charlie. 'That doesn't go with some things at all.'

'I've got some bicarbonate of soda in my bag,' said Mr. King, and Charlie took down the suitcase and opened it.

'The only drawback,' said Charlie, 'is that it might offend him to have us comparative strangers climb up into his cab with some bicarbonate, especially if he is just renting the cab for the afternoon.'

'Not if you do it in the right way,' said Mr. King. 'Leave it to me.'

So Mr. King dug around in his bag until he found some notepaper and then he sat down and began to write.

'Would you say, "Dear Engineer"?' he asked, 'or, "Dear Mr. Engineer"?''

'"Dear Mr. Engineer,"' replied Charlie, 'unless it is a relative, or a very dear friend.'

'I don't think he's a relative,' said Mr. King, 'most of our

family were professional men,' so he wrote, 'Dear Mr. Engineer,' and stopped.

'Unless,' he added thoughtfully, 'it is Cousin Lemuel. Cousin Lemuel was sort of the black sheep of the family—he eloped with an actress his sophomore year at Columbia. It might just possibly be Cousin Lemuel and he was always very sensitive,' so he crossed out the 'Mr.' and wrote 'Dear Engineer,' and then added, apologetically '(If I may call you so).'

'There,' he said, and waited for an inspiration.

"'In reply to yours of even date,'" suggested Charlie.

Mr. King shook his head.

'Too formal,' he said, 'and, besides, there wasn't any "yours of even date."'

'It's just a business form,' said Charlie. 'I learned it in the bank.'

The two men were silent in the face of what seemed an insurmountable difficulty. Charlie at last took out a pencil and wrote something on the back of an envelope. 'Here,' and he read: "'I suppose you are bothered with letters like this all the time, but I have always been a great admirer of your work and I just couldn't refrain from writing to tell you how much I enjoy the way you handle that engine and if you ever need any bicarbonate of soda, I hope you will let me be the first to know about it.'"

Mr. King shook his head.

'You forgot to ask him for a photograph,' he said, 'and, besides, those letters are always answered by the engineer's mother or his secretary.'

Charlie chewed the pencil disconsolately.

'No,' said Mr. King, 'I think it would probably be better to start with something a little less stereotyped—a little more personal,' and after a long interval, he began to write.

"'It is very pleasant here now,'" he read, as he went along,

"with just the right amount of tang in the air, and I often think of you up there in that hot cab and wish you were here."

The train came to a stop.

"Although quite warm at noon," continued Mr. King, "the nights are always cool and Thursday we actually slept between blankets. Think of that!"

'Now for the body of the letter,' said Mr. King.

"As I sit at my window and look out, I see——" The train started and Mr. King looked out.

'Oh, good Heavens!' he cried. 'This is our station!' and he slammed the bag shut and jumped up. Charlie grabbed everything in sight and they fled down the aisle and off the moving train.

THE PENGUIN

Will Cuppy

PENGUINS are dignified. For all we know, they may have a reason. To catch a Penguin off his dignity might take years and would hardly be worth the trouble. In standing, the Penguin rests his entire weight on the metatarsus, causing top-heaviness and certain nervous disorders. He flies in the water and barks. Penguins are very industrious. They carry sticks and stalks of grass for considerable distances and drop them into the ocean. The males steal stones from other Penguins and present them to the females, to Antarctic explorers, and to any other object of interest. The average Penguin has the mind of an eight-year-old child, but he gets his picture in the paper. Parental love exists among Penguins

to an unusual degree. The male and female Penguins often come to blows over the privilege of hatching the eggs and caring for the young. They love their offspring so much that many young Penguins crawl away during the night and fall through cracks in the ice.¹ Then it starts all over again. Male Penguins are unfaithful up to an advanced age, a phenomenon sometimes attributed to the sea air. Penguins are well-meaning birds with little or no idea of what is going on. Only the expert can tell a live Penguin from a stuffed one. It is probable that most Penguins are stuffed. Some people nearly die laughing at Penguins.

AUTRES BETES, AUTRES MŒURS

Ogden Nash

The turtle lives 'twixt plated decks
Which practically conceal its sex.
I think it clever of the turtle
In such a fix to be so fertile.

¹For this sketch of parental affection among Penguins, and for other bits of information too numerous to mention, I am indebted to Isabel Paterson, whose views on Antartics are uniformly sound and unfailingly brilliant; but then which of her views on other regions of the globe may one not describe in exactly the same terms? Perhaps this is the place to state that Mrs. Paterson by no means shares all the author's opinions on bird life. In a recent communication she says that she knows what I mean, and sympathizes profoundly, but that still, at the same time, she can see the birds' side of it, too.

MR. DOOLEY ON EXPERT TESTIMONY

Finley Peter Dunne

'ANYTHING new?' said Mr. Hennessy, who had been waiting patiently for Mr. Dooley to put down his newspaper.

'I've been r-readin' th' tistimony iv th' Lootgert case,' said Mr. Dooley.

'What d'ye think iv it?'

'I think so,' said Mr. Dooley.

'Think what?'

'How do I know?' said Mr. Dooley. 'How do I know what I think? I'm no combi-nation iv chemist, doctor, osteologist, polisman, an' sausage-maker, that I can give ye an opinion right off th' bat. A man needs to be all iv thim things to de-tarmine annything about a murdher trile in these days. This shows how intilligent our methods is, as Hogan says. A large German man is charged with puttin' his wife away into a breakfas'-dish, an' he says he didn't do it. Th' on'y question, thin, is, Did or did not Alphonse Lootgert stick Mrs. L. into a vat, an' rayjooce her to a quick lunch? Am I right?'

'Ye ar-re,' said Mr. Hennessy.

'That's simple enough. What th' coort ought to've done was to call him up, an' say: "Lootgert, where's ye'er good woman?" If Lootgert cudden't tell, he ought to be hanged on gin'ral principles; fr a man must keep his wife around th' house, an' whin she isn't there, it shows he's a poor provider. But, if Lootgert says, "I don't know where me wife is," the coort shud say: "Go out, an' find her. If ye can't projooce her in a week, I'll fix ye." An' let that be th' end iv it.

‘But what do they do? They get Lootgert into coort an’ stand him up before a gang iv young rayporthers an’ th’ likes iv thim to make pitchers iv him. Thin they summon a jury composed iv poor tired, sleepy expressmen an’ tailors an’ clerks. Thin they call in a profissor from a colledge. “Profissor,” says th’ lawyer f’r the State, “I put it to ye if a wooden vat three hundherd an’ sixty feet long, twenty-eight feet deep, an’ sivinty-five feet wide, an’ if three hundherd pounds iv caustic soda boiled, an’ if the leg iv a guinea pig, an’ ye said yestherdah about bi-carbonate iv soda, an’ if it washes up an’ washes over, an’ th’ slimy, slippery stuff, an’ if a false tooth or a lock iv hair or a jawbone or a goluf ball across th’ cellar eleven feet nine inches—that is, two inches this way an’ five gallons that?” “I agree with ye intirely,” says th’ profissor. “I made lab’ratory experiments in an ir’n basin, with bichloride iv gool, which I will call soup-stock, an’ coal tar, which I will call ir’n filings. I mixed th’ two over a hot fire, an’ left in a cool place to harden. I thin packed it in ice, which I will call glue, an’ rock-salt, which I will call fried eggs, an’ obtained a dark, queer solution that is a cure f’r freckles, which I will call antimony or doughnuts or anny-thing I blamed please.”

“‘But,” says th’ lawyer f’r th’ State, “measurin’ th’ vat with gas,—an’ I lave it to ye whether this is not th’ on’y fair test,—an’ supposin’ that two feet acrost is akel to tin feet sideways, an’ supposin’ that a thick green an’ hard substance, an’ I daresay it wud; an’ supposin’ you may, takin’ into account th’ measuremints,—twelve be eight,—th’ vat bein’ wound with twine six inches fr’m the handle an’ a rub iv th’ green, thin ar-re not human teeth often found in counthry sausage?” “In th’ winter,” says th’ profissor. “But th’ sisymoid bone is sometimes seen in th’ fut, sometimes worn as a watchcharm. I took two sisymoid bones, which I will call poker dice, an’ shook thim together in a cylinder, which I

will call Fido, poored in a can iv milk, which I will call gum arabic, took two pounds iv rough-on-rats, which I rayfuse to call; but th' raysult is th' same." Question be th' coort: "Different?" Answer: "Yis." Th' coort: "Th' same." Be Misther McEwen: "Whose bones?" Answer: "Yis." Be Misther Vincent: "Will ye go to th' divvle?" Answer: "It dissolves th' hair."

'Now what I want to know is where th' jury gets off. What has that collection iv pure-minded pathrites to larn fr'm this here polite discussion, where no wan is so crool as to ask what anny wan else means? Thank th' Lord, whin th' case is all over, the jury'll pitch th' tistimony out iv th' window, an' consider three questions: "Did Lootgert look as though he'd kill his wife? Did his wife look as though she ought to be kilt? Isn't it time we wint to supper?" An', howiver they answer, they'll be right, an' it'll make little diff'rence wan way or th' other. Th' German vote is too large an' ignorant, annyhow.'

THE TREASURER'S REPORT

Robert Benchley

THE report is delivered by an Assistant Treasurer who has been called in to pinch-hit for the regular Treasurer who is ill. He is not a very good public-speaker, this assistant, but after a few minutes of confusion is caught up by the spell of his own oratory and is hard to stop.

I shall take but a very few moments of your time this evening, for I realize that you would much rather be listening

to this interesting entertainment than to a dry financial statement . . . but I *am* reminded of a story—which you have probably all of you heard.

It seems that there were these two Irishmen walking down the street when they came to a—oh, I should have said in the first place that the parrot which was hanging out in *front* of the store—or rather belonging to one of these two fellows—the *first* Irishman, that is—was—well, *anyway*, this parrot—

(After a slight cogitation, he realizes that, for all practical purposes, the story is as good as lost; so he abandons it entirely and, stepping forward, drops his facile, story-telling manner and assumes a quite spurious businesslike air.)

Now, in connection with reading this report, there are one or two points which Dr. Murnie wanted brought up connection with it, and he has asked me to bring them up in connec—to bring them up.

In the first place, there is the question of the work which we are trying to do up there at our little place at Silver Lake, a work which we feel not only fills a very definite need in the community but also fills a very definite need—er—in the community. I don't think that many members of the Society realize just how big the work is that we are trying to do up there. For instance, I don't think that it is generally known that most of our boys are between the age of fourteen. We feel that, by taking the boy at this age, we can get closer to his real nature—for a boy *has* a very real nature, you may be sure—and bring him into closer touch not only with the school, the parents, and with each other, but also with the town in which they live, the country to whose flag they pay allegiance, and to the—ah—(*trailing off*) town in which they live.

Now the fourth point which Dr. Murnie wanted brought up was that in connection with the installation of the new

furnace last Fall. There seems to have been considerable talk going around about this not having been done quite as economically as it might—have—been—done, when, as a matter of fact, the whole thing *was* done just as economically as possible—in fact, even *more* so. I have here a report of the Furnace Committee, showing just how the whole thing was handled from start to finish.

(Reads from report, with considerable initial difficulty with the stiff covers.)

Bids were submitted by the following firms of furnace contractors, with a clause stating that if we did not engage a firm to do the work for us we should pay them nothing for submitting the bids. This clause alone saved us a great deal of money.

The following firms, then, submitted bids:

Merkle, Wybigant Co., the Eureka Dust Bin and Shaker Co., The Elite Furnace Shop, and Harris, Birnbauer and Harris. The bid of Merkle, Wybigant being the lowest, Harris, Birnbauer were selected to do the job.

(Here a page is evidently missing from the report, and a hurried search is carried on through all the pages, without result.)

Well, that pretty well clears up that end of the work.

Those of you who contributed so generously last year to the floating hospital have probably wondered what became of the money. I was speaking on this subject only last week at our up-town branch, and, after the meeting, a dear little old lady, dressed all in lavender, came up on the platform, and, laying her hand on my arm, said: 'Mr. So-and-so (calling me by name), Mr. So-and-so, what the hell did you do with all the money we gave you last year?' Well, I just laughed and pushed her off the platform, but it has occurred to the com-

mittee that perhaps some of you, like that little old lady, would be interested in knowing the disposition of the funds.

Now, Mr. Rossiter, unfortunately our treasurer—or rather Mr. Rossiter our *treasurer*, *unfortunately* is confined at his home tonight with a bad head-cold and I have been asked (*he hears someone whispering at him from the wings, but decides to ignore it*) and I have been asked if I would (*the whisperer will not be denied, so he goes over to the entrance and receives a brief message, returning beaming and laughing to himself*). Well, the joke seems to be on *me*! Mr. Rossiter has *pneumonia*!

Following, then, is a summary of the Treasurer's Report:
(*Reads, in a very businesslike manner.*)

During the year 1929—and by that is meant 1928—the Choral Society received the following in donations:

B. L. G.	\$500
G. K. M.	500
Lottie and Nellie W——.....	500
In memory of a happy summer at Rye Beach.....	10
Proceeds of a sale of coats and hats left in the boat-house	14.55
And then the Junior League gave a performance of 'Pinafore' for the benefit of the Fund which, unfortunately, resulted in a deficit of.....	300
Then, from dues and charges.....	2,354.75
And, following the installation of the new furnace, a saving in coal amounting to \$374.75—which made Dr. Murnie very happy, you may be sure.	
Making a total of receipts amounting to.....	\$3,645.75

This is all, of course, reckoned as of June.

In the matter of expenditures, the Club has not been so fortunate. There was the unsettled condition of business, and

the late Spring, to contend with, resulting in the following—er—rather discouraging figures, I am afraid.

Expenditures	\$23,574.85
Then there was a loss, owing to—several things—of	3,326.70
Car-fare	4,452.25
And then, Mrs. Rawlins' expense account, when she went down to see the work they are doing in Baltimore, came to \$256.50, but I am sure that you will all agree that it was worth it to find out—er—what they are doing in Baltimore.	
And then, under the general head of Odds and	
Ends	2,537.50
Making a total disbursement of.....	
(hurriedly)	\$416,546.75

or a net deficit of—ah—several thousand dollars.

Now, these figures bring us down only to October. In October my sister was married, and the house was all torn up, and in the general confusion we lost track of the figures of May and August. All those wishing the *approximate* figures for May and August, however, may obtain them from me in the vestry after the dinner, where I will be with pledge cards for those of you who wish to subscribe over and above your annual dues, and I hope that each and every one of you here tonight will look deep into his heart and (*archly*) into his pocketbook, and see if he cannot find it there to help us to put this thing over with a bang (*accompanied by a wholly ineffectual gesture representing a bang*) and to help and make this just the biggest and best year the Armenians have ever had. . . . I thank you.

(*Exits, bumping into proscenium.*)

REFLECTION ON CAUTION

Ogden Nash

Affection is a noble quality
It leads to generosity and jollity
But it also leads to breach of promise
If you go around lavishing it on red hot momise.

THREE WITHOUT, DOUBLED¹

Ring W. Lardner

I

THEY AIN'T no immediate chance o' you gettin' ast out to our house to dinner—not w'ile round steak and General Motors is sellin' at the same price and common dog biscuit's ten cents a loaf. But you might have nothin' decent to do some evenin' and happen to drop in on the Missus and I for a call; so I feel like I ought to give you a little warnin' in case that comes off.

You know they's lots o' words that's called fightin' words. Some o' them starts a brawl, no matter who they're spoke to. You can't call nobody a liar without expectin' to lose a couple o' milk teeth—that is, if the party addressed has got somethin' besides lemon juice in his veins and ain't had the misfortune to fall asleep on the Panhandle tracks and be separated from

¹From *Gullible's Travels*, by Ring Lardner. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

his most prominent legs and arms. Then they's terms that don't hit you so much yourself, but reflects on your ancestors and prodigies, and you're supposed to resent 'em for the sake of honor and fix the speaker's map so as when he goes home his wife'll say: 'Oh, kiddies! Come and look at the rainbow!'

Then they's other words and terms that you can call 'em to somebody and not get no rise; but call 'em to somebody else and the insurance companies could hold out on your widow by claimin' it was suicide. For instance, they's young Harold Greiner, one o' the bookkeepers down to the office. I could tell him he was an A. P. A., with a few adjectives, and he'd just smile and say: 'Quit your flirtin'!' But I wouldn't never try that expression on Dan Cahill, the elevator starter, without bein' well out of his earshots. And I don't know what it means, at that.

Well, if you do come out to the house they's a term that you want to lay off of when the Missus is in the room. Don't say: 'San Susie!'

It sounds harmless enough, don't it? They ain't nothin' to it even when it's transferred over from the Latin, 'Without no cares.' But just leave her hear it mentioned and watch her grab the two deadliest weapons that's within reach, one to use on you or whoever said it, and the other on me, on general principles.

You think I'm stringin' you, and I admit you got cause—that is, till you've heard the details of our latest plunge in the cesspools o' Society.

II

It was a Friday evenin' about three weeks ago when I come home and found the Wife quaverin' with excitement.

'Who do you think called up?' she ast me.

'I got no idear,' I says.

'Guess!' says she.

So I had to guess.

'Josephus Daniels,' I says. 'Or Henry Ford. Or maybe it was that guy with the scar on his lip that you thought was smilin' at you the other day.'

'You couldn't never guess,' she says. 'It was Mrs. Messenger.'

'Which one?' I ast her. 'You can't mean Mrs. A. D. T. Messenger.'

'If you're so cute I won't tell you nothin' about it,' says she.

'Don't make no rash threats,' I says. 'You're goin' to tell me some time and they's no use makin' yourself sick by tryin' to hold it in.'

'You know very well what Mrs. Messenger I mean,' she says. 'It was Mrs. Robert Messenger that's husband owns this buildin' and the one at the corner, where they live at.'

'Haven't you paid the rent?' I says.

'Do you think a woman like Mrs. Messenger would be buttin' into her husband's business?' says the Missus.

'I don't know what kind of a woman Mrs. Messenger is,' I says. 'But if I owned these here apartments and somebody fell behind in their rent, I wouldn't be surprised to see the owner's wife goin' right over to their flat and takin' it out o' their trousers pocket.'

'Well,' says the Wife, 'we don't owe them no rent and that wasn't what she called up about. It wasn't no business call.'

'Go ahead and spill it,' I says. 'My heart's weak.'

'Well,' she says, 'I was just gettin' through with the lunch dishes and the phone rang.'

'I bet you wondered who it was,' says I.

'I thought it was Mrs. Hatch or somebody,' says the Wife. 'So I run to the phone and it was Mrs. Messenger. So the first thing she says was to explain who she was—just like I didn't know. And the next thing she ast was did I play bridge.'

'And what did you tell her?' says I.

'What do you think I'd tell her?' says the Missus. 'I told her yes.'

'Wasn't you triffin' a little with the truth?' I ast her.

'Certainly not!' she says. 'Haven't I played twice over to Hatches'? So then she ast me if my husband played bridge, too. And I told her yes, he did.'

'What was the idear?' I says. 'You know I didn't never play it in my life.'

'I don't know no such a thing,' she says. 'For all as I know, you may play all day down to the office.'

'No,' I says; 'we spend all our time down there playin' post-office with the scrubwomen.'

'Well, anyway, I told her you did,' says the Missus. 'Don't you see they wasn't nothin' else I could tell her, because if I told her you didn't that would of ended it.'

'Ended what?' I says.

'We wouldn't of been ast to the party,' says the Missus.

'Who told you they was goin' to be a party?' I says.

'I don't have to be told everything,' says the Missus. 'I got brains enough to know that Mrs. Messenger ain't callin' me up and astin' me do we play bridge just because she's got a headache or feels lonesome or somethin'. But it ain't only one party after all, and that's the best part of it. She ast as if we'd care to join the club.'

'What club?' says I.

'Mrs. Messenger's club, the San Susie Club,' says the Missus. 'You've heard me speak about it a hundred times, and it's been mentioned in the papers once or twice, too—once, anyway, when the members give away them Christmas dinners last year.'

'We can get into the papers,' I says, 'without givin' away no Christmas dinners.'

'Who wants to get into the papers?' says the Wife. 'I don't care nothin' about that.'

'No,' I says; 'I suppose if a reporter come out here and ast for your pitcher to stick in the society columns, you'd pick up the carvin' knife and run him ragged.'

'I'd be polite to him, at least,' she says.

'Yes,' says I; 'it wouldn't pay to treat him rude; it'd even be justifiable to lock him in w'ile you was lookin' for the pitcher.'

'If you'll kindly leave me talk you may find out what I got to say,' she says. 'I've told you about this club, but I don't suppose you ever paid any attention. It's a club that's made up from people that júst lives in this block, twenty o' them altogether; and all but one couple either lives in this buildin' or in the buildin' the Messengers lives in. And they're all nice people, people with real class to them; not no tramps like most o' the ones we been runnin' round with. One o' them's Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Collins that used to live on Sheridan Road and still goes over to parties at some o' the most exclusive homes on the North Side. And they don't have nobody in the club that isn't congenial with each other, but all just a nice crowd o' real people that gets together once a week at one o' the members' houses and have a good time.'

'How did these pillows o' Society happen to light on to us?' I ast her.

'Well,' she says, 'it seems like the Baileys, who belonged to the club, went to California last week to spend the winter. And they had to have a couple to take their place. And Mrs. Messenger says they wouldn't take nobody that didn't live in our block, and her and her husband looked over the list and we was the ones they picked out.'

'Probably,' I says, 'that's because we was the only eligibles that can go out nights on account o' not havin' no children.'

'The Pearsons ain't ast,' she says, 'and they ain't got no children.'

'Well,' I says, 'what's the dues?'

'They ain't no dues,' says the Missus. 'But once in a w'ile, instead o' playin' bridge, everybody puts in two dollars apiece and have a theater party. But the regular program is for an evenin' o' bridge every Tuesday night, at different members' houses, somebody different actin' as hosts every week. And each couple puts up two dollars, makin' ten dollars for a gent's prize and ten dollars for a lady's. And the prizes is picked out by the lady that happens to be the hostess.'

'That's a swell proposition for me,' I says. 'In the first place they wouldn't be a chance in the world for me to win a prize, because I don't know nothin' about the game. And, in the second place, suppose I had a whole lot o' luck and did win the prize, and come to find out it was a silver mustache cup that I wouldn't have no more use for than another Adam's apple! If they paid in cash they might be somethin' to it.'

'If you win a prize you can sell it, can't you?' says the Missus. 'Besides, the prizes don't count. It's gettin' in with the right kind o' people that makes the difference.'

'Another thing,' I says: 'when it come our turn to have the party, where would we stick 'em all? We'd have to spread a sheet over the bathtub for one table, and have one couple set on the edges and the other couple toss up for the washbasin and the clothes-hamper. And another two couple'd have to kneel round the bed, and another bunch could stand up round the bureau. That'd leave the dinin'-room table for the fourth set; and for a special treat the remainin' four could play in the parlor.'

'We could hire chairs and tables,' says the Missus. 'We're goin' to have to some time, anyway, when you or I die.'

'You don't need to hire no tables for my funeral,' I says. 'If the pallbearers or the quartet insists on shootin' craps they can use the kitchen floor; or if they want beer and sandwiches you can slip 'em the money to go down to the corner.'

'They's no use worryin' about our end of it yet,' says the

Wife. 'We'll be new members and they won't expect us to give no party till everybody else has had their turn.'

'I only got one objection left,' I says. 'How am I goin' to get by at a bridge party when I haven't no idear how many cards to deal?'

'I guess you can learn if I learnt,' she says. 'You're always talkin' about what a swell card player you are. And besides, you've played w'ist, and they ain't hardly any difference.'

'And the next party is next Tuesday night?' I says.

'Yes,' says the Missus, 'at Mrs. Garrett's, the best player in the club, and one o' the smartest women in Chicago, Mrs. Messenger says. She lives in the same buildin' with the Messengers. And they's dinner first and then we play bridge all evenin'.'

'And maybe,' I says, 'before the evenin's over, I'll find out what's trumps.'

'You'll know all about the game before that,' she says. 'Right after supper we'll get out the cards and I'll show you.'

So right after supper she got out the cards and begun to show me. But about all as I learnt was one thing, and that was that if I died without no insurance, the Missus would stand a better show o' supportin' herself by umpirin' baseball in the National League than by teachin' in a bridge-w'ist university. She knew everything except how much the different suits counted, and how many points was in a game, and what honors meant, and who done the first biddin', and how much to bid on what.

After about an hour of it I says:

'I can see you got this thing mastered, but you're like a whole lot of people that knows somethin' perfect themselves but can't learn it to nobody else.'

'No,' she says; 'I got to admit that I don't know as much as I thought I did. I didn't have no trouble when I was playin' with Mrs. Hatch and Mrs. Pearson and Mrs. Kramer; but it seems like I forgot all they learnt me.'

'It's a crime,' I says, 'that we should have to pass up this chance to get in right just because we can't play a fool game o' cards. Why don't you call up Mrs. Messenger and suggest that the San Susies switches to pedro or five hundred or rummy, or somethin' that you don't need to take no college course in?'

'You're full o' brilliant idears,' says the Missus. 'They's only just the one game that Society plays, and that's bridge. Them other games is jokes.'

'I've noticed you always treated 'em that way,' I says. 'But they wasn't so funny to me when it come time to settle.'

'I'll tell you what we'll do,' says the Missus: 'we'll call up Mr. and Mrs. Hatch and tell 'em to come over here tomorrow night and give us a lesson.'

'That'd be sweet,' I says, 'askin' them to learn us a game so as we could join a club that's right here in their neighborhood, but they ain't even been ast to join it!'

'Why, you rummy!' she says. 'We don't have to tell 'em why we want to learn. We'll just say that my two attempts over to their house has got me interested and I and you want to master the game so as we can spend many pleasant evenin's with them; because Mrs. Hatch has told me a hundred times that her and her husband would rather play bridge than eat.'

So she called up Mrs. Hatch and sprung it on her; but it seemed like the Hatches had an engagement for Saturday night, but would be tickled to death to come over Monday evenin' and give us a work-out. After that was fixed we both felt kind of ashamed of ourselves, deceivin' people that was supposed to be our best friends.

'But, anyway,' the Missus says, 'the Hatches wouldn't never fit in with that crowd. Jim always looks like he'd dressed on the elevated and Mrs. Hatch can't talk about nothin' only shiropody.'

On the Saturday I tried to slip one over by buyin' a book

called 'Auction Bridge,' and I read it all the way home from town and then left it on the car. It was a great book for a man that had learnt the rudderments and wanted to find out how to play the game right. But for me to try and get somethin' out of it was just like as though some kid'd learn the baseball guide by heart in kindeygarden and then ask Hugh Jennin's for the job in centerfield. I did find out one thing from it though: it says that in every deal one o' the players was a dummy and just laid his cards down and left somebody else play 'em. So when I got home I says:

'We won't need no help from Jim Hatch and his wife. We can just be dummies all the evenin' and they won't nobody know if we're ignorant or not.'

'That's impossible, to be dummy all the time,' says the Missus.

'Not for me,' I says. 'I know it'll be tough for you, but you can chew a lot o' gum and you won't mind it so much.'

'You don't understand,' she says. 'The dummy is the pardner o' the party that gets the bid. Suppose one o' the people that was playin' against you got the bid; then the other one'd be dummy and you'd have to play your hand.'

'But I don't need to leave 'em have the bid,' I says. 'I can take it away from 'em.'

'And if you take it away from 'em,' she says, 'then you got the bid yourself, and your pardner's dummy, not you.'

Well, the Hatches breezed in Monday night and Mrs. Hatch remarked how tickled she was that we was goin' to learn, and what good times we four'd have playin' together. And the Missus and I pretended like we shared her raptures.

'Ain't you never played at all?' she ast me; and I told her no.

'The first thing,' she says, 'is how much the different suits counts; and then they's the bids. And you got to pay attention to the conventions.'

'I'm through with 'em forever,' I says, 'since they turned down Roosevelt.'

Well, we started in and Hatch and the Missus played Mrs. Hatch and I. We kept at it till pretty near midnight, with three or four intermissions so as Hatch could relieve the strain on the icebox. My w'ist education kept me from bein' much of a flivver when it come to playin' the cards; but, I don't care how bright a guy is, you can't learn everything about biddin' in one evenin', and you can't remember half what you learnt. I don't know what the score was when we got through, but the Hatches done most o' the execution and held most o' the cards, which is their regular habit.

'You'll get along all right,' says Mrs. Hatch when they was ready to go. 'But, o' course, you can't expect to master a game like bridge in a few hours. You want to keep at it.'

'We're goin' to,' says the Missus.

'Maybe it'd be a good idear,' says Mrs. Hatch, 'to play again soon before you forget what we learnt you. Why don't you come over to our house for another session tomorrow night?'

'Let's see; tomorrow night?' says the Missus, stallin'. 'Why, no, we can't. We got an engagement.'

So Mrs. Hatch stood there like she was expectin' to hear what it was.

'We're goin' to a party,' says the Wife.

'Oh, tell me about it!' says Mrs. Hatch.

'Well,' says the Missus, 'it ain't really a party; it's just a kind of a party; some old friends that's visitin' in town.'

'Maybe they'll play bridge with you,' says Mrs. Hatch.

'Oh, no,' says the Missus, blushin'. 'It'll probably be rummy or pedro; or maybe we'll just go to the pitchers.'

'Why don't you go over to the Acme?' says Mrs. Hatch. 'They got Chaplin in "The Street Sweeper." We're goin', and we could meet you and all go together.'

'N-no,' says the Wife. 'You see, one of our friends has just

lost his wife and I know he wouldn't feel like goin' to see somethin' funny.'

'He's already laughed himself sick,' I says.

Well, we wouldn't make no date with 'em and they finally blew with the understandin' that we was to go to their house and play some night soon. When they'd went the Missus says:

'I feel like a criminal, deceivin' 'em like that. But I just couldn't tell 'em the truth. Bertha Hatch is the most jealous thing in the world and it would just about kill her to know that we was in on somethin' good without she and Jim.'

'If you hadn't ast 'em over,' I says, 'we'd of been just as well off and you wouldn't of had to make a perjure out o' yourself.'

'What do you mean, we'd of been just as well off?' she says. 'They done what we expected of 'em, learnt us the game.'

'Yes,' I says; 'and you could take all I remember o' the lesson and feed it to a gnat and he'd say: "Hurry up with the soup course!"'

III

Well, Mrs. Garrett had called up to say that the feed before the game would begin at seven bells; so I and the Missus figured on bein' on hand at half past six, so as to get acquainted with some of our fellow club members and know what to call 'em when we wanted the gravy passed or somethin'. But I had trouble with my studs and it wasn't till pretty near twenty minutes to seven that we rung the Garretts' bell. The hired girl let us in and left us standin' in the hall w'ile she went to tell Mrs. Garrett we was there. Pretty soon the girl come back and says she would take our wraps and that Mrs. Garrett would be with us in a few minutes. So we was showed into the livin'-room.

The apartment was on the second floor and looked about twice as big as our'n.

'What do you suppose this costs 'em?' ast the Missus.

'About fifty-five a month,' I says.

'You're crazy!' says she. 'They got this big livin'-room and two big bedrooms, and a maid's room and a sun parlor, besides their dinin'-room and kitchen and bath. They're lucky if they ain't stuck for seventy.'

'I'll bet you!' I says. 'I'll bet you it's nearer fifty-five than seventy.'

'How much'll you bet?' she says.

'Anything you say,' says I.

'Well,' she says, 'I've got a cinch, and I need a pair o' black silk stockin's. My others has begun to run.'

'All right,' I says. 'A pair o' black silk stockin's to fifty cents cash.'

'You're on,' she says. 'And I'll call up the agent tomorrow and find out.'

Well, it must of been pretty near seven o'clock when Mrs. Garrett finally showed up.

'Good evenin',' she says. 'I suppose this must be our new members. I'm awfully glad you could come and I'm sorry I wasn't quite ready.'

'That's all right,' I says. 'I'm glad to know they's others has trouble gettin' into their evenin' clo'es. I suppose people that does it often enough finally get to be experts.'

'I didn't have no trouble,' says Mrs. Garrett; 'only I didn't expect nobody till seven o'clock. You must of misunderstood me and thought I said half past six.'

Then Mr. Garrett come in and shook hands with us, and then the rest o' the folks begun to arrive and we was introduced to them all. I didn't catch all their names, only Mr. and Mrs. Messenger and Mr. and Mrs. Collins and Mr. and Mrs. Sparks. Mrs. Garrett says dinner was ready and I was glad to hear it.

They set me down between Mrs. Messenger and a lady that I didn't get her name.

'Well,' I says to Mrs. Messenger, 'now we know you personally, we can pay the rent direct without botherin' to go to the real-estate office.'

'I'm afraid that wouldn't do,' she says. 'Our agent's entitled to his commissions. And besides, I wouldn't know how much to take or nothin' about it.'

'We pay thirty-five,' I says, 'and that's all as you could ast for, seein' we only got the four rooms and no sun parlor. Thirty-two and a half would be about the right price.'

'You'll have to argue that out with the agent,' she says.

I was kind of expectin' a cocktail; but nothin' doin'. The hired girl brought in some half sandwiches, made o' toast, with somethin' on 'em that looked like BB shot and tasted like New Year's mornin'.

'Don't we get no liquid refreshments?' I ast Mrs. Messenger.

'No, indeed,' she says. 'The San Susie's a dry club.'

'You should ought to call it the San Sousy, then,' says I.

The Missus was settin' next to Mr. Garrett and I could hear 'em talkin' about what a nice neighborhood it was and how they liked their flats. I thought I and the Missus might as well settle our bet then and there, so I spoke to Mr. Garrett acrost the table.

'Mr. Garrett,' I says, 'w'ile we was waitin' for you and your wife to get dressed, I and the Missus made a little bet, a pair o' silk stockin's against half a buck. I got to pay out two dollars here for the prize and the Missus claims her other stockin's has begun to run; so you might say we're both a little anxious.'

'Is it somethin' I can settle?' he ast.

'Yes, sir,' I says, 'because we was bettin' on the rent you paid for this apartment. The Missus says seventy a month and I says fifty-five.'

'I never decide against a lady,' he says. 'You better buy the

stockin's before the others run so far that they can't find their way home.'

'If I lose, I lose,' says I. 'But if you're stuck sixty-five or better, the Missus must of steered me wrong about the number o' rooms you got. I'll pay, though, because I don't never welsh on a bet. So this party's really costin' me two and a half instead o' two.'

'Maybe you'll win the prize,' says Mr. Garrett.

'They ain't much chance,' I says. 'I ain't played this game for a long w'ile.'

'Why, your wife was just tellin' me you played last night,' he says.

'I mean,' says I, 'that I didn't play for a long w'ile before last night; not for thirty-six years,' I says.

Well, when everybody'd got through chokin' down the shot, they brought in some drowned toadstools, and then some little slices o' beef about the size of a checker, and seven Saratoga chips apiece, and half a dozen string beans. Those that was still able to set up under this load finished up on sliced tomatoes that was caught too young and a nickel's worth of ice-cream and an eyedropper full o' coffee.

'Before I forget it,' says Mrs. Collins, w'ile we was staggerin' out o' the dihin'-room, 'you're all comin' to my house next Tuesday night.'

I was walkin' right behind her.

'And I got a suggestion for you,' I says, low enough so as they couldn't nobody else hear: 'Throw some o' the prize money into the dinner; and if they's any skimpin' to be done, do it on the prizes.'

She didn't say nothin' back, because Mrs. Garrett had started to hand us the little cards that showed where we was to play.

'I suppose I better tell you our rules,' she says to me. 'Each table plays four deals. Then the winners moves w'ile the losers

sets still, except at the first table, where the winners sets still and the losers moves. You change pardners after every four deals. You count fifty for a game and a hundred and fifty for a rubber.'

'The way I been playin',' I says, 'it was thirty for a game.'

'I never heard o' that,' she says; but I noticed when we got to playin' that everybody that made thirty points called it a game.

'Don't we see the prizes before we start?' I ast her. 'I want to know whether to play my best or not.'

'If you win the prize and don't like it,' she says, 'I guess you can get it exchanged.'

'They tell me you're the shark amongst the women folks,' says I; 'so it's a safe bet that you didn't pick out no lady's prize that isn't O. K.'

I noticed some o' the other men was slippin' her their ante; so I parted with a two-spot. Then I found where I was to set at. It was Table Number Three, Couple Number One. My pardner was a strappin' big woman with a name somethin' like Rowley or Phillips. Our opponents was Mrs. Garrett and Mr. Messenger. Mrs. Garrett looked like she'd been livin' on the kind of a meal she'd gave us, and Mr. Messenger could of set in the back seat of a flivver with two regular people without crowdin' nobody. So I says to my pardner:

'Well, pardner, we got 'em outweighed, anyway.'

They was two decks o' cards on the table. I grabbed one o' them and begin to deal 'em face up.

'First jack,' I says.

'If you don't mind, we'll cut for deal,' says Mrs. Garrett.

So we cut the cards and it seemed like the low cut got the deal and that was Mrs. Garrett herself.

'Which deck'll we play with?' I ast.

'Both o' them,' says Mrs. Garrett. 'Mr. Messenger'll make them red ones for you.'

'Make 'em!' I says. 'Well, Messenger, I didn't know you was a card factory.'

Messenger laughed; but the two ladies didn't get it. Mrs. Garrett dealt and it was her turn to bid.

'One without,' she says.

'I'd feel better if I had one within,' says I.

'Are you goin' to bid or not?' she ast me.

'I thought it was the dealer's turn first,' I says.

'I've made my bid,' she says. 'I bid one without.'

'One without lookin', or what?' I says.

'One no trump, if I got to explain it,' she says.

'Oh, that's different,' I says; but I found out that most all o' them said 'One without' when they meant one no trump.

I looked at my hand; but about all as I had was four hearts, with the king and jack high.

'Pardner,' I says, 'I don't see nothin' I can bid, unless it'd be one heart. Does that hit you?'

'No talkin' acrost the boards,' says Mrs. Garrett. 'And besides, one heart ain't over my bid.'

So I passed and Mr. Messenger bid two spades. Then my pardner passed and Mrs. Garrett thought it over a w'hile and then bid two without. So I passed again and the rest o' them passed, and it was my first lead.

Well, I didn't have only one spade—the eight-spot—and I knew it wouldn't do my hand no good as long as I couldn't trump in with it; so I led it out. Messenger was dummy, and he laid his hand down. He had about eight spades, with the ace and queen high.

'I might as well take a chance,' says Mrs. Garrett, and she throwed on Messenger's ten-spot.

Out come my pardner with the king, and it was our trick.

'What kind of a lead was that?' says Mrs. Garrett.

'Pretty good one, I guess,' says I. 'It fooled you, anyway.'

And she acted like she was sore as a boil. Come to find out,

she'd thought I was leadin' from the king and was goin' to catch it later on.

Well, her and Messenger took all the rest o' the tricks except my king o' hearts, and they had a game on us, besides forty for their four aces.

'I could of made a little slam as well as not,' she says when it was over. 'But I misunderstood our friend's lead. It's the first time I ever seen a man lead from a sneak in no trump.'

'I'll do a whole lot o' things you never seen before,' I says.

'I don't doubt it,' says she, still actin' like I'd spilled salad dressin' on her skirt.

It was my first bid next time and hearts was my only suit again. I had the ace, queen and three others.

'Pardner,' I says, 'I'm goin' to bid one heart and if you got somethin' to help me out with, don't let 'em take it away from me.'

'I'll double a heart,' says Messenger.

'Oh, somebody else is gettin' cute!' says I. 'Well, I'll double right back at you.'

'Will you just wait till it comes your turn?' says Mrs. Garrett. 'And besides, you can't redouble.'

'I guess I can,' says I. 'I got five o' them.'

'It's against our rules,' she says.

So my pardner done nothin,' as usual, and Mrs. Garrett bid one without again.

'I guess you want to play 'em all,' I says; 'but you'll have to come higher'n that. I'm goin' to bid two hearts.'

'Two no trump,' says Messenger, and my pardner says 'Pass' once more.

'You'll get a sore throat sayin' that,' I told her. 'Don't you never hold nothin'?'

'It don't look like it,' she says.

'Maybe she'd better take a few lessons from you,' says Mrs. Garrett.

'No,' I says, kiddin' her. 'You don't want no more female experts in the club or you might have to buy some cut glass once in a w'ile instead o' winnin' it.'

Well, I bid three hearts; but Mrs. Garrett come up to three no trump and I couldn't go no higher. This time I led out my ace o' hearts, hopin' maybe to catch their king; but I didn't get it. And Mrs. Garrett copped all the rest of 'em for a little slam.

'If your husband ever starts drinkin' hard,' I says, 'you can support yourself by sellin' some o' your horseshoes to the Russian government.'

It wasn't no lie, neither. I never seen such hands as that woman held, and Messenger's was pretty near as good. In the four deals they grabbed two rubbers and a couple o' little slams, and when they left our table they had over nine hundred to our nothin'.

Mr. Collins and another woman was the next ones to set down with us. The rules was to change pardners and Collins took the one I'd been playin' with. And what does she do but get lucky and they give us another trimmin', though nothin' near as bad as the first one. My pardner, this time, was a woman about forty-eight, and she acted like it was way past her bedtime. When it was her turn to say somethin' we always had to wait about five minutes, and all the other tables was through a long w'ile before us. Once she says:

'You'll have to excuse me tonight. I don't somehow seem to be able to keep my mind on the game.'

'No,' I says; 'but I bet you'd perk up if the lady's prize was a mattress. When you're goin' to be up late you should ought to take a nap in the afternoon.'

Well, sir, my next pardner wasn't nobody else but the Missus. She'd started at the fourth table and lost the first time, but win the second. She came along with the husband o' the pardner I'd just had; so here we was family against family, you might say.

'What kind o' luck you been havin'?' the fella ast me.

'No luck at all,' I says. 'But if you're anywheres near as sleepy as your Missus, I and my wife should ought to clean up this time.'

We didn't. They held all the cards except in one hand, and that was one my Missus tried to play. I bid first and made it a no trump, as they was three aces in my hand. Old Slumber began to talk in her sleep and says: 'Two diamonds.' The Missus bid two hearts. Mr. Sleeper passed, and so did I, as I didn't have a single heart in my hand and figured the Missus probably had 'em all. She had six, with the king high and then the nine-spot. Our female opponent had only two, and that left five for her husband, includin' the ace, queen and jack. We was set three.

'Nice work!' I says to the Missus. 'You're the Philadelphia Athletics of auction bridge.'

'What was you biddin' no trump on?' she says. 'I thought, o' course, you'd have one high heart and some suit.'

'You don't want to start thinkin' at your age,' I says. 'You can't learn an old dog new tricks.'

Mrs. Nap's husband cut in.

'O' course,' he says, 'it's a man's privilege to call your wife anything you feel like callin' her. But your Missus don't hardly look old to me.'

'No, not comparatively speakin',' I says, and he shut up.

They moved on and along come Garrett and Mrs. Messenger. I and Mrs. Messenger was pardners and I thought for a w'ile we was goin' to win. But Garrett and the Missus had a bouquet o' fourleaf clovers in the last two deals and licked us. Garrett wasn't supposed to be as smart as his wife, but he was fox enough to keep biddin' over my Missus, so as he'd do the playin' instead o' she.

It wasn't till pretty near the close o' the evenin's entertainment that I got away from that table and moved to Number

Two. When I set down there it was I and Mrs. Collins against her husband and Mrs. Sleeper.

'Well, Mrs. Collins,' I says, 'I'll try and hold some good hands for you and maybe I can have two helpin's o' the meat when we come to your house.'

The other lady opened her eyes long enough to ask who was winnin'.

'Oh, Mrs. Garrett's way ahead,' says Mrs. Collins. 'She's got a score o' somethin' like three thousand. And Mr. Messenger is high amongst the men.'

'Who's next to the leadin' lady?' I ast her.

'I guess I am,' she says. 'But I'm three hundred behind Mrs. Garrett.'

Well, the luck I'd just bumped into stayed with me and I and Mrs. Collins won and moved to the head table. Waitin' there for us was our darlin' hostess and Messenger, the two leaders in the pennant race. It was give out that this was to be the last game.

When Mrs. Garrett realized who was goin' to be her pardner I wisht you could of seen her face!

'This is an unexpected pleasure,' she says to me. 'I thought you liked the third table so well you was goin' to stay there all evenin'.'

'I did intend to,' I says; 'but I seen you up here and I heard you was leadin' the league, so I thought I'd like to help you finish in front.'

'I don't need no help,' she says. 'All I ast is for you to not overbid your hands, and I'll do the rest.'

'How many are you, Mrs. Garrett?' ast Mrs. Collins.

'Thirty-two hundred and sixty,' she says.

'Oh, my!' says Mrs. Collins, 'I'm hopeless. I'm only twenty-nine hundred and forty-eight. And how about you, Mr. Messenger?'

'Round thirty-one hundred,' he says.

'Yes,' says Mrs. Garrett, 'and I don't believe any o' the rest o' the men is within five hundred o' that.'

'Well, Messenger,' I says, 'if the men's prize happens to be a case o' beer or a steak smothered in onions, don't forget that I'm payin' you thirty-five a month for a thirty-dollar flat.'

Now, I'd of gave my right eye to see Mrs. Collins beat Mrs. Garrett out. But I was goin' to do my best for Mrs. Garrett just the same, because I don't think it's square for a man to not try and play your hardest all the time in any kind of a game, no matter where your sympathies lays. So when it come my turn to bid on the first hand, and I seen the ace and king and four other hearts in my hand, I raised Mrs. Collins' bid o' two diamonds, and Mrs. Garrett made it two no trump and got away with it. On the next two deals Messenger and Mrs. Collins made a game, and Mrs. Garrett got set a trick once on a bid o' five clubs. The way the score was when it come to the last deal, I figured that if Mrs. Collins and Messenger made another game and rubber, the two women'd be mighty close to even.

Mrs. Garrett dealt 'em, and says:

'One without.'

'Two spades,' says Mrs. Collins.

Well, sir, they wasn't a spade in my hand, and I seen that if Mrs. Collins got it we was ruined on account o' me not havin' a trump. And w'ile I wanted Mrs. Collins to win I was goin' to do my best to not let her. So I says:

'Two without.'

'You know what you're doin', do you?' says Mrs. Garrett.

'What do you mean, know what I'm doin'?' I says.

'No talkin' acrost the boards,' says Messenger.

'All right,' I says; 'but you can depend on me pardner, not to throw you down.'

Well, Messenger passed and so did Mrs. Garrett; but Mrs. Collins wasn't through.

'Three spades,' she says.

'Three without,' says I.

'I hope it's all right,' says Mrs. Garrett.

'I'll tell you one thing,' I says; 'it's a whole lot all-righter than if she played it in spades.'

Messenger passed again and ditto for my pardner.

'I'll double,' says Mrs. Collins, and we let it go at that.

Man, oh, man! You ought to seen our genial hostess when I laid down my cards! And heard her, too! Her face turned all three colors o' Old Glory. She slammed her hand down on the table, face up.

'I won't play it!' she hollers. 'I won't be made a fool of! This poor idiot deliberately told me he had spades stopped, and look at his hand!'

'You're mistaken, Mrs. Garrett,' I says. 'I didn't say nothin' about spades.'

'Shut your mouth!' she says. 'That's what you ought to done all evenin'.'

'I might as well of,' I says, 'for all the good it done me to keep it open at dinner.'

Everybody in the room quit playin' and rubbered. Finally Garrett got up from where he was settin' and come over.

'What seems to be the trouble?' he says. 'This ain't no bar-room.'

'Nobody'd ever suspect it o' bein',' I says.

'Look what he done!' says Mrs. Garrett. 'He raised my no-trump bid over three spades without a spade in his hand.'

'Well,' says Mr. Garrett, 'they's no use gettin' all fussed up over a game o' cards. The thing to do is pick up your hand and play it out and take your medicine.'

'I can set her three,' said Mrs. Collins. 'I got seven spades, with the ace, king and queen, and I'll catch her jack on the third lead.'

'And I got the ace o' hearts,' says Messenger. 'Even if it

didn't take a trick it'd make aces easy; so our three hundred above the line gives Mrs. Collins a score of about ten more'n Mrs. Garrett.'

'All right, then,' says Garrett. 'Mrs. Collins is entitled to the lady's prize.'

'I don't want to take it,' says Mrs. Collins.

'You got to take it,' says Garrett.

And he give his wife a look that meant business. Anyway she got up and went out o' the room, and when she come back she was smilin'. She had two packages in her hand, and she give one to Messenger and one to Mrs. Collins.

'There's the prizes,' she says; 'and I hope you'll like 'em.'

Messenger unwrapped his'n and it was one o' them round leather cases that you use to carry extra collars in when you're travelin'. Messenger had told me earlier in the evenin' that he hadn't been outside o' Chicago in six years.

Mrs. Collins' prize was a chafin'-dish.

'I don't blame Mrs. Garrett for bein' so crazy to win it,' I says to her when they couldn't nobody hear. 'Her and Garrett both must get hungry along about nine or ten p.m.'

'I hate to take it,' says Mrs. Collins.

'I wouldn't feel that way,' I says. 'I guess Mrs. Garrett will chafe enough without it.'

When we was ready to go I shook hands with the host and hostess and says I was sorry if I'd pulled a boner.

'It was to be expected,' says Mrs. Garrett.

'Yes,' I says; 'a man's liable to do most anything when he's starvin' to death.'

The Messengers and Collinses was a little ways ahead of us on the stairs and I wanted we should hurry and catch up with 'em.

'You let 'em go!' says the Missus. 'You've spoiled everything now without doin' nothin' more. Every time you talk you insult somebody.'

'I ain't goin' to insult them,' I says. 'I'm just goin' to ask 'em to go down to the corner and have a drink.'

'You are not!' she says.

But she's just as good a prophet as she is a bridge player. They wouldn't go along, though, sayin' it was late and they wanted to get to bed.

'Well, if you won't you won't,' says I. 'We'll see you all a week from tonight. And don't forget, Mrs. Collins, that I'm responsible for you winnin' that chafin'-dish, and I'm fond o' welsh rabbits.'

I was glad that we didn't have to go far to our buildin'. The Missus was pleasant company, just like a bloodhound with the rabies. I left her in the vestibule and went down to help Mike close up. He likes to be amongst friends at a sad hour like that.

At breakfast the next mornin' the Wife was more calm.

'Dearie,' she says, 'they don't neither one of us class as bridge experts. I'll admit I got a lot to learn about the game. What we want to do is play with the Hatches every evenin' this week, and maybe by next Tuesday night we'll know somethin'.'

'I'm willin',' I says.

'I'll call Mrs. Hatch up this forenoon,' she says, 'and see if they want us to come over there this evenin'. But if we do go remember not to mention our club or tell 'em anything about the party.'

Well, she had news for me when I got home.

'The San Susies is busted up,' she says. 'Not forever, but for a few months anyway. Mrs. Messenger called up to tell me.'

'What's the idear?' I says.

'I don't know exactly,' says the Missus. 'Mrs. Messenger says that the Collinses had boxes for the opera every Tuesday night and the rest didn't feel like goin' on without the

Collinses, and they couldn't all o' them agree on another night.'

'I don't see why they should bust it up on account o' one couple,' I says. 'Why didn't you tell 'em about the Hatches? They're right here in the neighborhood and can play bridge as good as anybody.'

'I wouldn't think o' doin' it,' says she. 'They may play all right, but think o' how they talk and how they dress!'

'Well,' I says, 'between you and I, I ain't goin' to take cyanide over a piece o' news like this. Somehow it don't appeal to me to vote myself dry every Tuesday night all winter—to say nothin' o' two dollars a week annual dues to help buy a prize that I got no chance o' winnin' and wouldn't know what to do with it if I had it.'

'It'd of been nice, though,' she says, 'to make friends with them people.'

'Well,' I says, 'I'll feel a little more confident o' doin' that if I see 'em once a year—or not at all.'

IV

I can tell you the rest of it in about a minute. The Missus had became resigned and everything was goin' along smooth till last Tuesday evenin'. They was a new Chaplin show over to the Acme and we was on our way to see it. At the entrance to the buildin' where the Messengers lives we seen Mr. and Mrs. Hatch.

'Hello, there!' says the Wife. 'Better come along with us to the Acme.'

'Not tonight,' says Mrs. Hatch. 'We're tied up every Tuesday evenin'.'

'Some club?' ast the Missus.

'Yes,' says Mrs. Hatch. 'It's a bridge club—the San Susie. The Messengers and Collinses and Garretts and us and some

other people's in it. Two weeks ago we was to Collinses', and last week to Beardsleys'; and tonight the Messengers is the hosts.'

The Missus tried to say somethin', and couldn't.

'I been awful lucky,' says Mrs. Hatch. 'I win the prize at Collinses'. It was a silver pitcher—the prettiest you ever seen!'

The Missus found her voice.

'Do you have dinner, too?' she ast.

'I should say we do!' says Mrs. Hatch. 'And simply grand stuff to eat! It was nice last week at Beardsleys'; but you ought to been at Collinses'! First, they was an old-fashioned beefsteak supper; and then, when we was through playin' Mrs. Collins made us welsh rabbits in her chafin'-dish.'

'That don't tempt me,' I says. 'I'd just as soon try and eat a raw mushrat as a welsh rabbit.'

'Well, we got to be goin' in,' says Hatch.

'Good-night,' says Mrs. Hatch; 'and I wisht you was comin' with us.'

The pitcher we seen was called 'The Fly Cop.' Don't never waste a dime on it. They ain't a laugh in the whole show.

ISIDOR HAS AN ARITHBETIC EXAPPLE LOOY, DOT DOPE, IS TROO

Milt Gross

ISIDOR FEITLEBAUM—Baba, do by arithbetic exapple for be?

MR. F.—Aha! Exemples I should do you alrady, ha? So like dees you'll be promuttet, ha? A whole day lung he lays, dot

goot for notting, in de school wot he's making dere speetz-balls, odder Halger books he's ridding instat he should pay attention de titcher so it comes de night time so he geeves me I should make exemples. (SMACK.) Tomorror (SMACK) dey'll tell you you should say a peaze—so you'll call me I should ritzite for you in de front from de cless yat maybe 'Bob-Hair Freetchie'—ha? (SMACK.) Odder you'll be a dantist so'll come in a costemer witt a tootache in de faze so you'll come to me I should pull heem out de toot, ha? Deed I esked mine fodder he should make me exemples? When I was in you age——

LOOY—Adda boy, tell em how ya lassooed all the mosquitoes in County Kriminchook.

MR. F.—Aha! You're here, dope?? Somebody sant for you?? Gerradahere queeck odder I'll geeve you witt de book in de had, beeg as you are! Noo, goot-for-notting, where is de exemple??

ISIDOR—Here—Bissus Sbith has twetty-seved cows, ad Bissus Burphy has twicet as beddy chickeds as Farber Browd's hed lays eggs. Dow, if wud-half of the dubber of pails of bilk that Bissus Sbith's cows give cost seved tibes as buch as wud-teth as buch as Bisses Burphy's chickeds cost per poud—how buch bore would Farber Browd get for a duzzed eggs if three tibes the dubber of calfs that Bissus Sbith's cows had was equal to wud ad wud-teth tibes bore thad the dubber of worbs that Bissus Burphy's chickeds catch id twetty-four hours, if each chicked catches seved ad a half worbs id three biddits ad ted secods?

MR. F.—Um-hmmmmmm!! Mmm—Hmm! Um hmmm!! Hmm—Mmm!!! Lat's we'll see, Messus Smeet hez twenteh-saven cows! Is no?? So hex hiquills a cow!! So—Hmmm-m—lat's we'll geeve a——

LOOY—Nope, they ain't no answers in the back of the book, pop!

MR. F.—Somebody hesked you a hopinion, dope? Gerrada—here queeck odder I'll—So if it lays itch han a hagg—mm—wait—gimme witt de tootpeecks—So itch tootpeeck rapraisants a cheecken—So now we'll gonna—

LOOY—Wait a minnit, I'll call up the lumber yard and gitcha some tootpicks.

MR. F.—Why you should call opp a lomber yod? Take batter hout from you domb had wot it's fool from wood!

MRS. F.—Looy go way, you shouldn't annoying de papa!

LOOY—Who's annoyin im? I'm helpin im—

MR. F.—So seex witt a hate ploss fife times fur witt trick-wodders, how motch it feegures?

LOOY—See next week's Red Magic!! Ha ha!!! I think I'll getcha to figger up me next year's income tax fer me, pop—ha ha! 'At's a hot one! Me income tax!!! Air inspector fer Street, Walker & Co!!!

MRS. F.—Dope, sharrop alrady—

MR. F.—Hm-m-m-m! Tree-feefts from a cheecken—Moltply by feefty-seex witt a heff woims—So it hiquills—Hm-m—wait. Meesus Smeet hez twenteh-savan cows—so it diwides de—mm-mm—hex ploss why—ploss—mm—itch 'cow—mm—hedded opp witt a dozen heggs, so is—mm—WARR—Meesus Smeet hez twenteh-savan cows—

LOOY—Stick wid it, pop. When ya git done, go out and ketch me thoity-five raindrops!!! Ha ha!

MRS. F.—Shhhhh! Kipp closed alrady de fullish mout.

MR. F.—So seex witt savan it hedds opp toiteen—

LOOY—Hooray!!! Fine, kid!!! Ya oughta do an act on Lowe's witt de Chinaman 'at guesses numbers blindfolded.

CRASH!!!!

MRS. F.—Deedn't I told you!

LOOY—Awright—'at settles it—I'm troo witt dis house. He can't sock me witt no book, an' git away wid it! This

ain't the Dutch Army, y'know! This is a free country! I don't hafta stay here an' stand fer 'at stuff. I kin git a room!!! I'll show 'im——

ISIDOR—Baba—Did you fide the answer, yet?

MR. F.—(SMACK)!!!! A queeck soivice you want, ha—? (SMACK.) A rabid fire hedding machine I bicaame all from a sodden, ha? (SMACK.) Deed I gave you (SMACK) a wreeten gerrentee (SMACK) wot I'll gonna deeleever it to you (SMACK) prowmpitilly? (SMACK.) De henswer (SMACK) I know lung ago! Bot I want wot you (SMACK) goot-for-notting—you should feegure heem hout youself, for you own goot—(SMACK)!!!

MRS. F.—Mowriss, not in de had!!!

WHAT SHOULD CHILDREN TELL PARENTS?

James Thurber and E. B. White

SO MANY CHILDREN have come to me and said, 'What shall I tell my parents about sex?' My answer is always the same: 'Tell them the truth. If the subject is approached in a tactful way, it should be no more embarrassing to teach a parent about sex than to teach him about personal pronouns. And it should be less discouraging.'

In discussing sex enlightenment for parents, first of all, definitions are needed. What do we mean by 'parents'? Do we mean all adults who have had children? Do we mean adults who have had children, they knew not why? Or do we mean married people who have given birth to one or more offspring but have never gone into the matter very

thoroughly? For the purposes of this article, it will be assumed that by 'parents' we mean all adult persons permeated with a strong sense of indecency.

I have talked with hundreds of children about the problem of educating their parents along sex lines. So many of them have told me that they honestly tried to give their elders the benefit of their rich experience in life, but that the parents usually grew flushed and red and would reply, 'Nice people don't talk about such things.' It is true that a great gap exists between generations. The fact that children are embarrassed to have their parents along when they are attending certain movies or plays is indicative of how hard it is to overcome the old fear of allowing one's elders to learn anything. A child never knows at what point in a play his uninformed old father will start to giggle. It is hard for children to break through and really come in touch with their elders. 'Nice people don't talk about such things!' is the defense which old people put up against life itself, when they feel it crowding in all around their heads. Parents hesitate to discuss things calmly and intelligently with their children for two reasons: first, they have a kind of dread of learning something they don't want to know; and second, they feel that if they must learn anything at all they would like to be spared the humiliation of learning it from their offspring. Actually, middle age (and even senescence) is marked by a great curiosity about life. There is a feeling that life is slipping away quickly, and that it would be terrible to have the end come before everything in life has been revealed. The beauty of life, always apparent, implies a mystery which is disturbing right up to the bitter end. The spectacle of old men wistfully attending sex lectures (as they frequently do) suggests that the strong suspicion exists in them that somewhere they will hear the magic word by which human affairs will become clarified, somewhere they will glimpse the ultimate

ecstasy. Children who allow their fathers and mothers, to whom they owe their very existence, to go on wondering about sex, are derelicts to duty.

If young folks lack the tact or intelligence requisite to enlightening their parents, the task should be intrusted to someone else. Yet it is hard to say to whom. A child should think twice before sending his father around to public school to secure sex information from his teacher. Women teachers, to borrow a phrase, are apt to be 'emotionally illiterate.' Many teachers have had no sex life and are just waiting for somebody like your father to show up.

One's father and mother are never too old to be told facts. Indeed, it is most unkind to keep them in ignorance and allow them to nourish the doubts and horrors of their imagination. The majority of parents pick up their knowledge of the facts of life from smoking-car conversations, bridge-club teas, and after-dinner speakers. They receive it from their vicious adult companions who are only slightly less ignorant than they are and who give them a hopelessly garbled version. They pick it up, too, from the gutter.

This matter of picking up information from the gutter is an interesting topic in itself. Quite the most remarkable case history that has come to my notice is that of François Delamater, a parent thirty years of age, who went deliberately to the gutter for his sex education. He had heard, as all people do hear sometime or other, that sex can be learned from the gutter, so he set out to make a comprehensive survey of the gutters of eighteen large American cities. For a long time he found out nothing, although he was a very curious man. By a peculiar piece of fortune, however, he happened to be walking in Cincinnati one day and met a man who was leading a tame stork. The man was in the gutter. The stork carried in its bill a live baby, in swaddling clothes. Smelling a

rat, Mr. Delamater stopped the man and inquired where the baby came from. The man replied that he didn't know.

'For that matter,' continued Mr. Delamater, 'where does *any* baby come from?'

The man shook his head. Then he relented and told Mr. Delamater that he had merely been hired to lead the stork around the streets to advertise a moving picture called 'Her Husband's First-born.' The whole incident so confused the mind of the thirty-year-old parent that he eventually evolved the strange theory that babies are born within the father, an erroneous notion that dwarfed his emotions and modified his character.

It is of the utmost importance, in imparting sex knowledge to one's parents that it be done in such a way as not to engender fear or anxiety. The phraseology should be chosen carefully, and efforts should be made to explain everything clearly but without the use of words which have a tendency to make old people nervous. The word 'erotic' is such a word. When it is necessary to speak of Man's erotic tendencies, it is best to substitute another word. In the first place, an overwhelming majority of parents do not know the exact meaning of the word 'erotic,' and to know an *inexact* meaning is worse than nothing. Many are apt to confuse it vaguely with 'exotic.' I have known parents to go through whole books by authors like Havelock Ellis or Mary Ware Dennett without understanding a single paragraph, because they thought Man's 'eroticism' referred to his desire to be in some foreign place like Spain. Those parents that actually do detect the difference between the sound of the two words will immediately become nervous, inattentive, and dispirited. They will make some excuse to leave the room, and will wander out, probably to the ice-box to get themselves a cold snack, which they will eat while in a sulky frame of mind. Later they will look up the word in the dictionary, but will forget it by the time

they hear it again in conversation or read it in print. Furthermore, all their taste for sex will be gone.

Just what to tell parents is, of course, a vital question, not to be answered dogmatically. Before a child can conscientiously approach such subjects as pedestalism, the recessive knee, begoniaism, frigidity in men, birth control, sublimation, and the swastika fixation, he must clear the boards. The simple phases of sex should be imparted in a direct manner: it is best to explain things in a matter-of-fact way, rather than resort to such cloudy analogies as birds and flowers. Strange to say, the habits of birds and flowers have done as little to clarify the human scene as almost any other two manifestations in nature. Further, there is always the danger, in setting up plant or animal life as an example, that one's parents will place a literal interpretation on things. I am thinking particularly of the case—which all sociological students know about—of Nina Sembrich, the fifteen-year-old high-school girl who attempted to impart knowledge to her father by telling him about bees. (Nina's mother was dead, or she would have told her too.) She traced, in rather minute detail, the renascence of earth in spring, the blossoming of the trees, the activity of the bees and their function in distributing the pollen, the fertilization of the seed and its growth during the warm languorous summer days, finally the fruition and harvest.

It was a beautiful story, redolent of orchards and sunny hillsides, instinct with life—a story that had a soporific effect on Mr. Sembrich, lulling him as the buzz of a bee lulls one in hot daisy fields. The upshot of it was that he gathered a rather strange impression from the narrative and somehow got the idea that to have babies you had to keep bees. He bought several hives, installing them in the little sitting-room on the second floor, where Mrs. Sembrich had kept her sewing-machine when she was alive. The acquisition of the apiary further complicated matters for Mr. Sembrich by rea-

son of the fact that bees themselves enjoy a rather extraordinary sexual scheme—theirs is a complex society, infinitely more diverting and harder to understand than our own. Observed by a slightly nervous person who is trying to profit by a simple analogy—as Mr. Sembrich was—bees are capable of causing the utmost confusion.

If you will recall what you know about bees, you will readily understand what I mean. In a colony of bees, certain individuals have no sex whatsoever; these are the 'workers.' The male bees are 'drones.' The queen (or 'mother') bee develops her sexual character only after being arbitrarily chosen for the purpose, walled up, and fattened on special food. Mr. Sembrich marveled at these things.

Basing his hopes entirely on what he had seen, he made his first overt act, which was to give up his business (he was a merchant tailor) on the assumption that to be endowed with masculine characteristics one had to be a drone. In this, of course, he was justified to some degree; for it is quite true that very busy men rarely are fully equipped for a complete or happy sex life. Business men commonly find a vicarious gratification for their erotic nature in card index systems. Often, their satiable appetite for life is dissipated in the process of dictating a single sales letter. Only men who devote virtually their entire attention to love ever glimpse its full glory or experience its bewildering intensity. (And *they* make so little money they might just as well not.)

Mr. Sembrich, therefore, was not without justification in becoming a drone, since life was what he wanted to find out about. But it was when he undertook to fatten up a lady of his acquaintance into a 'mother' that he ran into difficulties. He locked her in the kitchen and plied her with rich desserts. He even urged honey on her—a rather literal expedient even for a man in his mental condition. The lady not only failed to become a mother, but she took sick and died, surrounded

by a group of Mr. Sembrich's 'workers,' whom he had hired to help feed her. With a dead woman in the kitchen and a lot of bees upstairs in the sitting-room, the household became unbearable as a place to live and bring up his daughter Nina, so Mr. Sembrich fled, still ignorant of the essential knowledge of life.¹

Another case, not exactly paralleling the Sembrich affair, is the case of two parents who failed to learn something to their advantage because they happened to be at dinner. It happened this way. Charles Updegraff had sent his son, Junior, to spend the summer at a boys' camp. There in addition to learning how to swim, paddle, and make fires, Junior learned about sex, so that he returned home fine and brown and a credit to the Updegraffs. (The Updegraffs had swum, paddled, made fires, and so on, for generations.) Now, at Camp Whortleberry (that was the name of the camp) the authorities had adopted what is known as the 'pet method' for imparting sex knowledge to the boys. Each boy was given charge of a pet of some kind, and the pets were given *carte blanche*. Junior Updegraff drew a pair of sunfish. To augment the actual pet study, the boys were also given lectures by the camp director, who knew in a general way what he was talking about. Thus, when the summer was over the boys' minds were full of a strange assortment of facts and oddments, some of them rather amusing. Young Junior had hardly been home an hour when he thought he would do his old man a good turn by telling him what he knew about sunfish. The Updegraffs were at table.

'Pop,' he said, 'do you want the low down on a sunfish?'

Mrs. Updegraff hastily interrupted. 'Better wait till after dinner, son,' she said.

(Note: parents have always been held back by the superstitious idea that it is wrong to learn anything while eating.)

¹Sexually speaking.

'What's the matter with right now?' asked Junior. 'I was just going to tell Pop about our pet study course. I know a lot of things.'

'Wait till we're through eating,' said Mrs. Updegraff.

'Why should I? A mouse is an embryo twenty days, a lop-sided apple is that way because it's been fertilized only on one side, male animals grow bright colored in the mating season, and so it goes. Sunfish . . .'

'Junior!' said Mrs. Updegraff, sharply. 'Not till after dinner. Sunfish can wait!'

'No they can't!' cried Junior, warming up to his subject. 'The father sunfish makes the nest, then . . .'

'We don't want to hear about it,' snapped Junior's mother. 'Tell us about your canoe trips.'

'I never went on no canoe trips.'

'Why not?'

'Always was watching the sunfish.'

The matter was dropped and the meal continued in silence. After dinner Mr. Updegraff, secretly very much interested, hung around in the hope that his son would again open up the subject of sunfish. The boy never did. He was only a child and children are easily discouraged.

I suspect that the church is responsible, in large measure, for the ideas of life now held by adults. Sex is still sin to the evangelical clergy. A kiss is thinkable only when sanctified by the church. A child who permits his parents to continue in the belief that the elevation of the soul depends on the renunciation of the flesh, is hardly doing his duty by them. Sometimes it may be advisable to quote to your parents from standard works on the subject of sex. Great care must be taken, though, to avoid abruptness, as far as possible. Thus there is some doubt in my mind whether a child ought to approach its mother on a hot afternoon when she is tired and bedraggled, and say to her: 'Ma, under favorable conditions

a husband and wife should remain sexually attractive to each other during the whole period of their sexual potency.'

That's no way for a child to talk.

Some children have told me that instead of quoting from books they have tried leaving the books lying around, opened at pertinent pages. Even this failed to work in most cases. The mothers usually just picked up the book, dusted it, closed it, and fitted it neatly in some nearby shelf. They thought it was dusty.

IS THE TELEPHONE A SUCCESS?

Corey Ford

MORE AND MORE the telephone is entering into our national life; people are taking it up everywhere. And as this invention increases in prominence daily, we hear the question repeated on all sides: Has the telephone come to stay?

Half a century of experimentation has passed now, and today the nation is divided into two camps on the question of whether or not the telephone is a success. The first camp, Kamp Idle Hours, declares positively that the idea of the telephone was absurd to start with and the whole invention may as well be discarded at once, as soon as they can get back their nickel. On the other hand Camp Minnehaha, which is located on the opposite side of the question, with a much better bathing beach, declares positively that the telephone may some time become a practicable and essential part of our national life.

In such a debate we must not be too hasty to adopt the opinions of either camp. While there is much to be said (and

it very often is) on the failure of the telephone to accomplish what it set out to do, yet we cannot expect too much the first fifty years. When we are inclined to blame the telephone because we cannot get our number, let us remember the automobile. Let us remember the radio. Let us remember that we are gentlemen. Anyway, let us take a deep breath and count to fifty.

Personally I do not believe that the telephone should be abolished altogether, for I still have faith that the idea is fundamentally sound, and that some good will come of it in time. I think that the telephone has possibilities.

The telephone depends upon the principle of sound-waves, which are very similar to the waves of the ocean except that there are never any lettuce sandwiches floating on top of them. The speaker talks at a thin, sheet-iron diaphragm (*f*) which is located just above the stomach and which vibrates in synchronism with these sound-waves impinging upon it. This impinging naturally tickles it, and it laughingly transfers the waves to *g*.

Behind this *g*, or *h*, is located either a compound magnet, or a bipolar magnet with coils on each of its pole tips and nasty sharp claws, which snap at the voice as it goes hurrying by. The voice now proceeds by long induction coils (*C*) to the battery, where it may visit the aquarium and see the fishes. The return trip uptown is accomplished by magnetic lines, inducing a current (*c*) according to Faraday's law. Before this law was passed the trip was accomplished by a transmitter, or old-fashioned stagecoach, and often took as many as two or three days.

The sound is now ready to be passed rapidly through the magneto (*L*), where it is thoroughly dried and cleaned and given a new suit of clothes, and started along a piece of heavy bent wire, called a hair-pin, until it reaches the *multiple* or calling-jack, where it establishes a contact. Once this contact

is made and the multiple is really interested in the proposition, the voice writes back at once to the main office for further instructions. It then proceeds to the Front Electrode Terminal, buys its ticket, hands it to the *conductor* (M) and finally reaches the person at the other end of the line, who meantime has gotten tired of waiting and hung up on it a long time ago.

This unclaimed voice now remains inside the wire, where it becomes a Red Rover and may tackle either side.

Although the telephone was originally intended as a private institution, through which a person could talk to himself without danger of being overheard, the possibility has been realized lately of using this invention to establish connection between *two* persons, the sender and the receiver. In order to accomplish this unusual feat, each subscriber is presented with his own little plug, which is located somewhere along the switchboard opposite the Operator; and the only remaining problem is to discover which plug belongs to which subscriber. With four million or so of these plugs in front of the Operator, the reader must realize that the chance of her pressing the right one at first is necessarily slight; and the impatient subscribers, roused out of bed to answer the phone, have been known to arrive at hasty and unpleasant conclusions that are very, very unfair, and only hurt.

We must remember that these Operators are all trying eagerly to organize this vast system, and get the Telephone Office straightened up a little. For example, an Operator named Miss Wedge receives a request for Bryant 0000. (I'm just saying that, there really isn't any such number, so there's no use of your ringing it up.) She invites over a couple of other Operators, and they all light their cigarettes and lean back and study the switchboard, and shake their heads dubiously.

'They all look alike to me,' sighs Miss Wedge wearily, staring at the hopeless tangle of plugs.

'Do you suppose *this* one is Bryant 0000?' suggests an Operator with an eager grin.

'There's just one chance in four million,' shrugs Miss Wedge; but to be obliging she pushes in the suggested plug, fires a revolver into the mouthpiece, and inquires listlessly if it is Bryant 0000. If the party replies sleepily among other things that no, for gosh sakes, this isn't Bryant 0000, Miss Wedge replies: 'Excuseit, pleez,' and carefully writes down on a little chart above the plug: 'This isn't Bryant 0000.'

No whit discouraged, the other Operator giggles and shuts her eyes. 'Try . . . *this* one,' she says triumphantly, pointing her finger at a second plug and opening her eyes again.

'Nope,' sighs Miss Wedge presently, firing her revolver; and she writes on the chart above the plug: 'This isn't Bryant 0000 either.'

With eyes sparkling the other Operator is then blind-folded and turned around three or four times, and advances toward the switchboard in a fairly straight line, with forefinger outstretched. Amid shrieks of laughter from the girls, she pushes in a plug in the lower left corner; and to everyone's consternation, it turns out to be none other than Bryant 0000.

The remaining problem is to find out which of these four million plugs was the one that wanted it.

From this brief consideration of the telephone 'system,' as it is called, the reader may see the difficulties it must face before it can become a working invention. Although the telephone industry is still in its infancy, I am one of those who believe firmly that it will yet succeed.

In fact, I shall go further. I am willing right now to lay a little wager with the reader. I do not want to seem visionary; but I should like to predict that *within another fifty years it will be possible to talk over a little piece of wire to a friend*

twenty or thirty miles away! The reader may laugh at me for this prophecy now; but some day he will laugh up the other sleeve.

It is only a matter of time.

REFLECTION ON ICE-BREAKING

Ogden Nash

Candy
Is dandy
But liquor
Is quicker

BUT THE ONE ON THE RIGHT

Dorothy Parker

I KNEW it. I knew if I came to this dinner, I'd draw something like this baby on my left. They've been saving him up for me for weeks. Now, we've simply got to have him—his sister was so sweet to us in London; we can stick him next to Mrs. Parker—she talks enough for two. Oh, I should never have come, never. I'm here against my better judgment. Friday, at eight-thirty, Mrs. Parker vs. her better judgment, to a decision. That would be a good thing for them to cut on my tombstone: Wherever she went, including here, it was against her better judgment. This is a fine time of the eve-

ning to be thinking about tombstones. That's the effect he's had on me, already, and the soup hardly cold yet. I should have stayed at home for dinner. I could have had something on a tray. The head of John the Baptist, or something. Oh, I should not have come.

Well, the soup's over, anyway. I'm that much nearer to my Eternal Home. Now the soup belongs to the ages, and I have said precisely four words to the gentleman on my left. I said, 'Isn't this soup delicious?' ; that's four words. And he said, 'Yes, isn't it?'; that's three. He's one up on me.

At any rate, we're in perfect accord. We agree like lambs. We've been all through the soup together, and never a cross word between us. It seems rather a pity to let the subject drop, now we've found something on which we harmonize so admirably. I believe I'll bring it up again; I'll ask him if that wasn't delicious soup. He says, 'Yes, wasn't it?' Look at that, will you; perfect command of his tenses.

Here comes the fish. Goody, goody, goody, we got fish. I wonder if he likes fish. Yes, he does; he says he likes fish. Ah, that's nice. I love that in a man. Look, he's talking! He's chattering away like a veritable magpie! He's asking me if I like fish. Now does he really want to know, or is it only a line? I'd better play it cagey. I'll tell him, 'Oh, pretty well.' Oh, I like fish pretty well; there's a fascinating bit of autobiography for him to study over. Maybe he would rather wrestle with it alone. I'd better steal softly away, and leave him to his thoughts.

I might try my luck with what's on my right. No, not a chance there. The woman on his other side has him cold. All I can see is his shoulder. It's a nice shoulder, too; oh, it's a nice, *nice* shoulder. All my life, I've been a fool for a nice shoulder. Very well, lady; you saw him first. Keep your Greek god, and I'll go back to my Trojan horse.

Let's see, where were we? Oh, we'd got to where he had

confessed his liking for fish. I wonder what else he likes. Does he like cucumbers? Yes, he does; he likes cucumbers. And potatoes? Yes, he likes potatoes, too. Why, he's a regular old Nature-lover, that's what he is. I would have to come out to dinner, and sit next to the Boy Thoreau. Wait, he's saying something! Words are simply pouring out of him. He's asking me if I'm fond of potatoes. No, I don't like potatoes. There, I've done it! I've differed from him. It's our first quarrel. He's fallen into a moody silence. Silly boy, have I pricked your bubble? Do you think I am nothing but a painted doll with sawdust for a heart? Ah, don't take it like that. Look, I have something to tell you that will bring back your faith. I do like cucumbers. Why, he's better already. He speaks again. He says, yes, he likes them, too. Now we've got that all straightened out, thank heaven. We both like cucumbers. Only he likes them twice.

I'd better let him alone now, so he can get some food. He ought to try to get his strength back. He's talked himself groggy.

I wish I had something to do. I hate to be a mere drone. People ought to let you know when they're going to sit you next to a thing like this, so you could bring along some means of occupation. Dear Mrs. Parker, do come to us for dinner on Friday next, and don't forget your drawn-work. I could have brought my top bureau drawer and tidied it up, here on my lap. I could have made great strides towards getting those photographs of the groups on the beach pasted up in the album. I wonder if my hostess would think it strange if I asked for a pack of cards. I wonder if there are any old copies of *St. Nicholas* lying about. I wonder if they wouldn't like a little help out in the kitchen. I wonder if anybody would want me to run up to the corner and get a late paper.

I could do a little drinking, of course, all by myself. There's always that. Oh, dear, oh, dear, oh, dear, there's always that.

But I don't want to drink. I'll get *vin triste*. I'm melancholy before I even start. I wonder what this stiff on my left would say, if I told him I was in a fair way to get *vin triste*. Oh, look at him, hoeing into his fish! What does he care whether I get *vin triste* or not? His soul can't rise above food. Purely physical, that's all he is. Digging his grave with his teeth, that's what he's doing. Yah, yah, ya-ah! Digging your grave with your tee-eeth! Making a god of your stomnick! Yah, yah, ya-ah!

He doesn't care if I get *vin triste*. Nobody cares. Nobody gives a damn. And me so nice. All right, you baskets, I'll drink myself to death, right in front of your eyes, and see how you'll feel. Here I go. . . . Oh, my God, it's Chablis. And of a year when the grapes failed, and they used Summer squash, instead. Fifteen dollars for all you can carry home on your shoulder. Oh, now, listen, where I come from, we feed this to the pigs. I think I'll ask old Chatterbox on my left if this isn't rotten wine. That ought to open up a new school of dialectics for us. Oh, he says he really wouldn't know—he never touches wine. Well, that fairly well ends that. I wonder how he'd like to step to hell, anyway. Yah, yah, ya-ah! Never touches wi-yine! Don't know what you're miss-sing! Yah, yah, ya-ah!

I'm not going to talk to him any more. I'm not going to spend the best years of my life thinking up pearls to scatter before him. I'm going to stick to my Chablis, rotten though it be. From now on, he can go his way, and I'll go mine. I'm better than he is. I'm better than anybody at this table. Ah, but am I really? Have I, after all, half of what they have? Here I am lonely, unwanted, silent, and me with all my new clothes on. Oh, what would Louiseboulanger say if she saw her gold lamé going unnoticed like this? It's life, I suppose. Poor little things, we dress, and we plan, and we hope—and for what? What is life, anyway? A death sentence. The long-

est distance between two points. The bunch of hay that's tied to the nose of the tired mule. The——

Well, well, well, here we are at the *entrecôte*. Button up your *entrecôte*, when the wind is free—no, I guess not. Now I'll be damned if I ask old Loquacity if he likes meat. In the first place, his likes and dislikes are nothing to me, and in the second—well, look at him go after it! He must have been playing hard all afternoon; he's Mother's Hungry Boy, tonight. All right, let him worry it all he wants. As for me, I'm on a higher plane. I do not stoop to him. He's less than the dust beneath my chariot wheel. Yah, yah, ya-ah! Less than the du-ust! Before I'd be that way! Yah, yah, ya-ah!

I'm glad there's red wine now. Even if it isn't good, I'm glad. Red wine gives me courage. The Red Badge of Courage. I need courage. I'm in a thin way here. Nobody knows what a filthy time I'm having. My precious evening, that can never come again, ruined, ruined, ruined, and all because of this Somewhat Different Monologist on my left. But he can't lick me. The night is not yet dead, no, nor dying. You know, this really isn't bad wine.

Now what do you suppose is going on with the Greek god on my right? Ah, no use. There's still only the shoulder—the nice, *nice* shoulder. I wonder what the woman's like, that's got him. I can't see her at all. I wonder if she's beautiful. I wonder if she's Greek, too. When Greek meets immovable body—you might be able to do something with that, if you only had the time. I'm not going to be spineless any longer. Don't think for a minute, lady, that I've given up. He's still using his knife and fork. While there's hands above the table, there's hope.

Really, I suppose out of obligation to my hostess, I ought to do something about saying a few words to this macaw on my left. What shall I try? Have you been reading anything good lately, do you go much to the play, have you ever

been to the Riviera? I wonder if he would like to hear about my Summer on the Riviera; hell, no, that's no good without lantern slides. I bet, though, if I started telling him about That One Night, he'd listen. I won't tell him—it's too good for him. Anybody that never touches wine can't hear that. But the one on the right—he'd like that. He touches wine. Touches it, indeed! He just threw it for a formidable loss.

Oh, look, old Silver Tongue is off again! Why, he's mad with his own perfume! He's rattling away like lightning. He's asking me if I like salad. Yes, I do; what does he want to make of that? He's telling me about salad through the ages. He says it's so good for people. So help me God, if he gives me a talk on roughage, I'll slap his face. Isn't that my life, to sit here, all dressed up in my best, and listen to this thing talk about romaine? And all the time, right on my right—

Well, I thought you were never going to turn around. . . . You haven't? . . . You have? Oh, Lord, I've been having an awful time too. . . . Was she? . . . Well, you should have seen what I drew. . . . Oh, I don't see how we could. . . . Yes, I know it's terrible, but how can we get out of it? . . . Well. . . . Well, yes, that's true. . . . Look, right after dinner, I'll say I have this horrible headache, and you say you're going to take me home in your car, and—

MEMOIRS OF A BANQUET SPEAKER

James Thurber

THE SANITY of the average banquet speaker lasts about two and a half months; at the end of that time he begins to mutter

to himself, and calls out in his sleep. I am dealing here with the young banquet speaker, the dilettante, who goes into it in quest of glamour. There is, he finds out too late, no glamour at banquets—I mean the large formal banquets of big associations and societies. There is only a kind of dignified confusion that gradually unhinges the mind.

Late in my thirty-fifth year, having tasted every other experience in life (except being rescued by Captain Fried), I decided to be a guest of honor at some glittering annual dinner in a big New York hotel. At first blush, you might think it would be difficult to be asked. It isn't. You don't, of course, have to be a member of an organization in order to address its annual banquet. In fact the organization doesn't even have to know who you are, and it almost never does. The names of the speakers are got out of newspapers and phone books, and from the better Christmas cards; sometimes a speaker is suggested to the entertainment committee by a woman named Mrs. Grace Voynton. That's all I know about her. She suggested me. I never saw her again. As a matter of fact, I never saw her at all. She phoned me one day and asked if I would address the annual banquet of a certain organization, the name of which, in the ensuing conversation, which was rather controversial, slipped my mind. I said I wouldn't address the banquet because my dinner pants were too tight. She was pleased to regard this as a pleasantry, and phoned me again the next day, as a woman will. Finally I said I would make a short talk. I was told to be at the Commodore Hotel at seven-thirty on a certain Wednesday evening. It was only when I was in a taxi on my way to the hotel that I realized I didn't know the name, or the nature, of the organization I was going to talk to—let alone what I was going to talk about. So high is the courage of youth that the young banquet speaker is likely to dismiss this unfortunate ignorance too lightly. He has an idea that Mrs.

Voynton will be at the hotel, or that the doorman will recognize him. Certainly, he thinks, it is going to be easy enough to find the banquet-room. It *isn't* going to be, though (the italics are mine). During the banqueting season anywhere from three to eleven banquets are being held, simultaneously, at the average hotel on any given night. Not realizing this, the young guest of honor is almost sure to think that the first banquet table he spies is the one at which he belongs. There is only about one chance in ten that he is right.

I walked into the first banquet-room that I came to, on the mezzanine floor, after having been met by no one at all except a man who asked me where the ladies' dressing-room was. I told him I didn't know and he walked over and told a lady who was with him that I didn't know. There is no reason in the world why a trivial incident like that should unnerve a banquet speaker; it leaves him, however, with a vague sense of insecurity: he begins to wonder where he is, and what night it is, and whether the whole thing may not possibly be a hoax.

In somewhat of a daze—the first warning of a bad mental state—I found myself seated at a long table on a dais, next to a lady who asked me, as soon as I had drunk a glass of ice water, if I understood the makeup and purposes of the organization we were about to address. She had also accepted over the phone, and had had a miserable connection. I told her facetiously—as one who whistles in the dark to keep his nerve up—that I was under the impression we were the guests of honor at the National Women's Bulb-Raising Association. This caused the man on her right to pale slightly. He drank a little water and whispered to me that, on the contrary, we were at the annual dinner of the North-Eastern States Meat-Handlers Association. I could see, however, that he was uncertain of himself on that point: he kept twisting his

napkin. After the coffee and ice cream he was called upon for the first speech of the evening, and if ever a man touched lightly on the meat-handling situation he did. His nervous condition and incoherent remarks obviously upset the toastmaster who, all we speakers were instantly aware, was not absolutely sure that he was at the right banquet himself.

At this point, since I figured that several speakers were yet to come before I would be called on, I slipped from the table and made a hasty trip to the lobby to look up the sign which tells where the various conventions are being held. Seven were listed, and their locations were given merely as Ballroom A, Ballroom B, Second Assembly Hall, Jade Room, etc. It was impossible to identify these rooms in the short time at my disposal and so I simply hurried back to my seat. From the sign, however, I had discovered that there was a possibility I might be in the midst of the National Chassis-Builders Association, the Society for the Advancement of Electric Welding, the American Society of Syrup and Fondant Makers, or the Past Presidents and Active Officers of Ye Olde Record Binding Company.

As I sat in my chair, breathing heavily, I tried to think up a few words of greeting and appreciation which might apply equally to the aims and purposes of all the various organizations. This got me nowhere at all. Nor did I receive any help from the gentleman who was talking at the moment. His expression was the agonized expression of a man who hasn't the slightest idea what it is all about and wishes he were home. He told four stories, in a husky voice, and sat down. The toastmaster now arose and said that we were going to have the pleasure of listening to a man who knew more about the subject nearest our hearts than anyone else in America, a man whose great authority in this field had been recognized by his being selected to write on the subject for the new 'Encyclopædia Britannica' (I quote him more or less ac-

curately—it was a little more involved than that). Instead of naming his man at this juncture, the toastmaster told a story, and then reverted to the world's greatest authority on the subject nearest our hearts, repeating what he had already said and finally, with a sweep of his hand, pronouncing the speaker's name—'Mr. Septimus R. Groves.' As the toastmaster sat down, I lapsed back into my chair and applauded lightly. Nobody got up. All eyes then followed the toastmaster's—and rested finally on me. I knew now that I was at the wrong banquet. Vaguely, as I got to my feet, I wondered where Mr. Groves was, and on what subject he was so eminent an authority. I was received with tremendous applause. When it quieted down I began to speak. I sketched briefly the advance of transportation, the passing of riveting, the improvement shown in the handling and distribution of meats, and the absolute reliance that one could place nowadays upon the bindings of old records. In conclusion I left with my audience the thought that in meat-handling, as in bulb-raising, chassis construction, electric welding, and binding old records it is Service and Coöperation that count. The speech was received with thunderous applause and a little stomping.

It was not until I got into a taxi that I realized my mind was already beginning to go. The driver asked me where to. I was surprised to hear myself tell him the Pennsylvania Hotel. There I registered as 'Septimus R. Groves.' 'We already have a Septimus R. Groves registered here,' said the clerk with polite interest. 'What's his name?' I asked. 'Septimus R. Groves,' he said. 'He's attending the annual banquet of the Fish and Game Wardens.' 'Oh,' I said, 'there must be some mistake; the man you're thinking of is Horace R. Morgner—gypsum blocks and building laths.' The clerk gave me my room key, albeit with a certain reluctance. It was a week before I went home. I don't mutter any longer, but I still cry out in my sleep.

THE BABY

Ogden Nash

A bit of talcum
Is always walcum.

CARNIVAL WEEK IN SUNNY LAS LOS

Robert Benchley

YOU HAVE all doubtless wanted to know, at one time or another, a few of the quaint customs which residents of the continent of Europe seem to feel called upon to perpetuate from one century to another. You may know about a few of them already, such as childbearing (which has been taken up on this continent to such an alarming extent) and others of the more common variety of folk mannerisms, but I am very proud and happy to be able to tell you today of some of the less generally known customs of the inhabitants of that medieval Spanish province Las Los (or Los Las, as it was formerly called, either way meaning 'The The' *pl.*) where I have had the extremely bad fortune to be spending the summer.

Las Los, nestling, as it does, in the intercostal nooks of the Pyrenees, makes up into one of the nicest little plague-spots on the continent of Europe. Europe has often claimed that

Las Los was *not* a part of it, and in 1356 Spain began a long and costly war with France, the loser to take Los Las and two outfielders. France won and Spain built an extension onto the Pyrenees in which to hide Los Las. They succeeded in hiding it from view, but there was one thing about Los Las that they forgot; so you always know that it is there.

It was in this little out-of-the-way corner of the world, then, that I set up my easel and began painting my fingers and wrists. I soon made friends with the natives (all of whom were named Pedro) and it was not long before they were bringing me their best Sunday knives and sticking them in my back for me to try to tell which was which. And such laughter would go up when I guessed the wrong one! All Latins, after all, are just children at heart.

But I am not here to tell you of the many merry days I myself spent in Las Los, but of some of the native customs which I was privileged to see, and, once in a while, take part in. They rather resent an outsider taking part in most of them, however, for there is an old saying in Las Los that 'when an outsider takes part, rain will surely dart' (meaning 'dart' from the clouds, you see) and above all things rain is abhorred in that section of the country, as rain has a tendency to cleanse whatever it touches, and, as another old proverb has it, 'clean things, dead things'—which isn't exactly accurate, but appeals to these simple, childish people, to whom cleanliness is next to a broken hip.

First of all, then, let us tiptoe up on the natives of Las Los during their carnival time. The carnival week comes during the last week in July, just when it is hottest. This makes it really ideal for the Los Lasians, for extreme heat, added to everything else, renders their charming little town practically unbearable. This week was chosen many hundreds of years ago and is supposed to mark the anniversary of the marriage of old Don Pedro's daughter to a thunderbolt, a union which

was so unsatisfactory to the young lady that she left her husband in two days and married a boy named Carlos, who sold tortillas. This so enraged the thunderbolt that he swore never to come to Los Las again, and, from that day to this (so the saying goes, I know not whether it be true or not) that region has never had any locusts. (This would almost make it seem that the repulsed bridegroom had been a locust, but the natives, on being questioned, explain that the *patois* for 'thunderbolt' [*enjuejox*] is very much like the *patois* for 'locust' [*enjuejox*] and that the thunder god, in giving his order for the future of Los Las, put the accent on the wrong syllable and cut them off from locusts instead of thunder storms). This may, or may not, be the truth, but, as I said to the old man who told me, 'Who the hell cares?'

The first day of the Carnival of the Absence of Locusts (just why they should be so cocky about having no locusts is not clear. Locusts would be a god-send compared to some of the things they *have* got) is spent in bed, storing up strength for the festival. On this day all the shops, except those selling wine, are closed. This means that a little shop down by the river which sells sieves is closed. People lie in bed and send out to the wine-shops for the native drink, which is known as *wheero*. All that is necessary to do with this drink is to place it in an open saucer on the window sill and inhale deeply from across the room. In about eight seconds the top of the inhaler's head rises slowly and in a dignified manner until it reaches the ceiling where it floats, bumping gently up and down. The teeth then drop out and arrange themselves on the floor to spell 'Portage High School, 1930,' the eyes roll upward and backward, and a strange odor of burning rubber fills the room. This is followed by an unaccountable feeling of intense lassitude.

Thus we may expect nothing from the natives for the first two days of the carnival, for the second day is spent in look-

ing for bits of head and teeth, and in general moaning. (A sorry carnival, you will say—and *I* will say, too.) But later on, things will brighten up.

On the third day the inhabitants emerge, walking very carefully in order not to jar off their ears, and get into a lot of decorated ox carts. They are not very crazy about getting into these ox carts, but it is more or less expected of them at carnival time. Pictures are taken of them riding about and are sent to the London illustrated papers, and if they were to pass up one year without riding in decorated ox carts, it wouldn't seem like carnival week to the readers of the London illustrated papers. You can hardly blame a man with a *wheero* hangover, however, for not wanting to bump around over cobblestones in an old two-wheeled cart, even if it has got paper flowers strung all over it. One of the saddest sights in the world is to see a native, all dressed up in red and yellow, with a garland of orange roses around his neck, jolting and jouncing along over hard stone bumps with a girl on his knee, and trying to simulate that famous Spanish smile and gay abandon, all the time feeling that one more bump and away goes that meal he ate several days ago along with his legs and arms and portions of his lower jaw. No wonder Spaniards look worried.

However, there is a great deal of shouting and cawing among those who can open their mouths, and occasionally someone hits a tambourine. This is usually frowned upon by the person standing next to the tambourine-hitter and a remark, in Spanish, is made which could roughly be translated as: 'For the love of God, shut up that incessant banging!'

The carnival, which is known as *Romeria*, is supposed to be a festival of the picnic type combined with a religious pilgrimage to some sort of shrine. This shrine, however, is never reached, as along about noon of the third day some desperate guy, with a hangover no longer to be borne, evolves

a cure on the 'hair of the dog that bit you' theory, and the *wheero* is brought out again. The village watering trough is filled with it and a sort of native dance is held around the trough, everyone inhaling deeply. Those who are still unable to inhale are carried to the edge of the trough and a little *wheero* is rubbed on their upper-lips, just under the nose. Then it is 'good-night all, and a merry, merry trip to Blanket Bay,' for the festive villagers, and the carnival is shot to hell. A week later business is quietly resumed.

On the fifth day of the carnival there is supposed to be a bull chase through the streets. The principle of the thing is that a bull is let loose and everyone chases it, or vice versa. As, however, there was nobody fit to chase a butterfly, much less a bull, on the fifth day of this carnival, I had to take care of the bull myself. The two of us sat all alone in the public square among the cadavers drinking a sort of lemon squash together.

'A dash of *wheero*?' I asked the bull.

Well, you should have heard him laugh! After that, I got up on his back and rode all around the town, visiting the points of interest and climbing several of the better looking mountains. Pretty soon we were in Turkey, where we saw many interesting sights and then, swinging around through the Balkans, I got back just in time for me to scramble into bed. I must have hit my head on the footboard while pulling up the sheet, for the next morning (or whenever it was) when I awoke, I had quite a bad headache. Thank heaven I knew enough to lay off that *wheero*, however. I'm no fool.

AN INTERESTING CURE

Frank Sullivan

COMING DOWN on the subway last Tuesday, as I sometimes do on alternate Tuesdays, I noticed a man sitting on the seat opposite who appeared to be in a high state of nervous excitement. He was staring wide-eyed at one of the advertising cards in the car. I took my stethoscope and rushed over to him.

He was about five feet ten inches in height and just a bit bald. I said he was bald and I still maintain he was bald, but a Mrs. Maria M. Sturgeon, sixty-seven, of No. 2 Grand Concourse, who sat nearby, said he was not bald.

'I know baldness when I see it,' said Mrs. Sturgeon. 'All our family is bald. Early piety, Grandma Finch used to say it was. My Fred was bald when he was twenty-two, but Uncle Homer always likes sugar on his tomatoes. Now this gentleman is not bald. He just has a high forehead.'

I said that it was not a case of high forehead in my twenty years of practice, and I know a high forehead when I see one. This was a clear case of baldness. I said so, and I didn't care who heard me.

The patient, whom we shall call Mr. X., was forty-four, and one of ten or fifteen children. His maternal grandfather had fought in the Civil War and after going through two battles developed a pronounced case of *cinqui* and left the army. The patient's mother had suffered from Hodgkin's disease, Pott's disease, Alexander F. Detwiller's disease, and had been tapped for Riggs's disease, but did not join.

The patient's retina reacted favorably to light. He had had the usual children's diseases: measles when he was thirty-seven, scarlatina when he was thirty-eight and whooping-cough when he was forty, but he had never had chicken pox, although his son, Alvah, now going on thirteen and smart as a whip, had had chicken pox when he was five and once again, for good measure, when he was eight.

'You ought to see that kid,' said Mr. X. 'He's into everything. He has a radio and gets Davenport, Ia., on it every night. He got a hundred in geography seven months running last year. He's about four feet ten inches in height, light brown, curly hair, freckles, all his front teeth out, and when last seen wore a blue cotton shirt, patched brown pants and no shoes or stockings.'

'Well, I wouldn't be too much alarmed about my condition, if I were you,' I told the patient. 'I can tell you definitely, without even a detailed examination, that your condition is not serious. You are a trifle neurasthenic, perhaps. You know, America is getting to be a land of neurasthenics. It's the pace we set ourselves—jazz, money-madness, modern hooch, and that sort of thing. Americans, too, are prone to worry. Now, you think that the morbid sensations you experience are peculiar to yourself. My dear man,' I told him, adjusting my glasses, 'there are many like you. Many come to me who are in far greater difficulty than you,' I told him, adjusting his necktie. 'That man you saw just leaving the train at 14th Street is a tugboat captain, and do you know the phobia I am treating him for? He's afraid of sharp instruments. In the medical world we have a term for that phobia. We call it being afraid of sharp instruments.'

'I am treating another man who is mortally afraid of closed places, such as the subway, the tubes or a crowded theater. We call that claustrophobia, for lack of a better name. Isn't it remarkable how far medical science has progressed? Now, an-

other very common fear is the fear of insanity. What makes you think you are going crazy?’

He pointed a shaking hand at a car advertisement telling about the virtues of a certain collar.

‘It will not wilt, shrink, crack or wrinkle,’ proclaimed the ad.

‘Yes,’ I said, sympathetically, adjusting my suspenders, ‘what about it?’

‘It’s got me,’ he moaned. ‘I can’t say it. Oh, my God, I can’t say it! Take me away.’

‘Tut, my dear man,’ I assured him. ‘You can say it, of course you can. You simply have a psychoneurosis. You have panic hysteria. You must have regular exercise, plenty of good, plain food, and eight hours’ sleep at night. Now try and say it.’

‘It—it will not wilt, crink, wack or shrinkle,’ he said, and with a cry of despair flung his head into his arms.

‘Come now, again,’ I urged.

‘It’s no use,’ he cried, ‘I’ve been trying to do it all the way down from Dyckman Street and I can’t.’

‘Oh, now, be yourself!’ I encouraged him. ‘Ready now. One for the money, two for the show, three to get ready and four to—GO!’

‘It will not wilt, kink, shack or winkle,’ he cried, and burst into a flood of tears.

It was a rather strange case. I asked him what dreams he had dreamed the preceding night. He said he hadn’t slept. I saw that he had a marked *Cædipus* fixation. I thought I saw a way to help him. I would set an example for him, and leave the rest to suggestion. Suggestion is very powerful.

‘Listen to me,’ I told him, ‘and learn how perfectly simple the whole thing is, when you have rid yourself of your inhibitions.’

I continued in a firm tone: 'It will not wink, shink, wack or crinkle.'

Odd, I thought, but due, of course, to the power of suggestion. He had actually communicated a bit of his hysteria to me.

D 'Pardon me, my error,' I told him, 'I'll try again. It will not wilt, kink, wack or shinkle.'

Damn! *Daggoned it!*

A faint smile played about Mr. X.'s mouth. His pulse was much better, his respiration was normal, and his humidity had sunk to three-thirty. He was able to partake of a little custard, a glass of sherry and egg, and a planked steak or two.

D 'Now I'm going to try again,' I told him, briskly, 'and this time watch me get it.'

But I didn't.

Mr. X. was laughing heartily now, and appeared to be in a greatly improved frame of mind. His disorientation ceased and he remembered being in Washington at Harding's inauguration.

P 'Why, it's a cinch,' he told me. 'All you have to do is to get rid of your psychoneurosis, ^{1.200 m} and just read plain English. Listen: It will not wilt, shrink, crack or wrinkle.'

I was delighted. The man was cured. The passengers crowded about me, shaking my hand. Several lifted me to their shoulders and began singing 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow!' but my head got caught in one of the fans, and when I came to it was midnight, and we were at 242d Street and Van Cortlandt Park. Somebody had lifted my watchchain, Sunday school medals and my \$1.40 pin money for the week. I consider the cure of Mr. X. one of the great triumphs of my career.

THE CROW

Will Cuppy

THE CROW is tough. He uses no baby talk even in mating season. During courtship, the male feeds the female, but he soon gets wise to himself. He does not help incubate. He thinks he's done enough. The Crow pulls up the corn, ruins the lettuce, pecks at the hired man's eyes, kidnaps young chickens, scatters poison ivy, and disseminates the germs of hog cholera, roup, and bumblefoot. For these reasons he is called the farmer's friend. Crows bathe when it rains. Their nests are lined with rabbit fur. The Raven is called Ralph or Grip.¹

Crows hold courts of justice, where sentence is passed upon Crows who do not know the Mayor. After much cawing by the judge and a jury of the usual sort the defendant is torn to pieces to teach him a lesson. All and sundry then repair to a nearby tree to commit simony, petty larceny, tergiversation and misfeasance, evict a few widows and orphans, double cross one another and make more laws. After a good laugh they hold evening prayers and go to roost in the wrong nests. Aristotle described the Crow as chaste. In some departments of knowledge Aristotle was too innocent for his own good. I am frequently asked the meaning of 'Caw! Caw! Caw!'² It means nothing whatever.

¹If you cannot distinguish between the various members of the Crow family, don't let it worry you. Good livings have been made by telling anecdotes designed to show the great intelligence of the Raven, the Rook, the Jackdaw, the Chough and the Magpie, but the field is overcrowded at present. For obvious reasons Crows seem more intelligent to some people than to others.

²These are stirring times for Crow commentators, who are begin-

THE RABBITS

Ogden Nash

Here's a verse about rabbits
That doesn't mention their habits.

I LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT SEX¹

Corey Ford

'YOU SEE this here fish, June?' old Britches asked me one afternoon. 'This here fish is called a sucker. It's called a sucker because it will swallow almost anything. There's hundreds of thousands of these suckers, June, and most of them read travel books.'

I never forgot the lesson that he taught me.

My life at sea started at a very tender age. In fact my first impression upon opening my eyes on the world was of being dangled unceremoniously upside down by the heels, while the family doctor spanked me repeatedly with his open palm. It

ning to wonder if the Crow really does say *Caw! Caw! Caw!* Some of the young moderns hold that the bird says *Caar! Caar! Caar!* and others insist upon *Karr! Karr! Karr!* Indeed, one courageous scholar has come out for *Varawķ! Varawķ! Varawķ!* The fact is, it depends entirely upon the individual crow.

¹From *Salt Water Taffy, the Almost Incredible Autobiography of Captain Ezra Triplett's Seafaring Daughter, June Triplett.*

seemed to me even then that this spanking business was starting pretty early, and I objected in my childish treble.

'Hey, what the hell?' I piped.

'Rockaby, baby,' replied the doctor kindly, seizing my ankles and slamming me against the mattress until I was red in the face.

'Listen, no damned son of a — can get away with *that!*' I gasped, my father's blood roaring in my veins. 'Rockaby, baby, eh!' and wrenching loose a slat from the cradle I swung on him with all my strength. Two hours later I reported aboard the Ethel M. Dell with my duffle wrapped up in a triangular piece of white linen.

I was as weak as a baby when I was born, and indeed it was several weeks at sea before I was able to hoist a sail as well as the rest of the crew. In the meantime my father turned me over to the care of old Britches. Britches was the sail-maker on our boat—that is, when the wind fell off and we were becalmed, it was old Britches that Father called on to make sail—and from the time he first took charge of me until he perished in the fatal fire that finally destroyed our boat, he devoted his life to my care. For fourteen years he taught me the mysteries of the sea; and although I abused him and pestered him and embarrassed him as only a child can, yet everything that I am today I owe to him. Poor old Britches!

I recall Britches as the only man who was older than Father. His life was just one more of those mysteries of the sea. Nobody knew where he came from—some said he was a descendant of Robert Britches, the poet—but when he and his brother came aboard to sign on the Ship's Articles, he fiddled with the pen for a moment and then said: 'Our father's name was Britches, Skipper, and if you don't mind we'll just sign on the same way.'

'Just a couple of sons of Britches,' answered Father, who knew a good joke when he saw one.

So the old sailor signed the Articles just 'Britches,'² and for fifteen years he went by no other name. In appearance he was unlike any other sailor I ever saw, an effect which was partially caused by the fact that he always wore a derby hat and carried a riding-crop. To discreet inquiries as to the purpose of these articles, he would only reply: 'You never can tell when you might find a horse,' but it was generally believed that they referred to some romance of his buried past, and that in his youth he might have been thrown by a favorite mount. Whatever was his secret, Britches never told. He had a pleasant face surrounded by a fringe of red hair, and a wide comfortable lap, which did not disappear when he stood up, as most laps do, but merely ran around behind him and showed up under an assumed name. I spent many happy hours in that lap, learning some of the mysteries of the sea.

The first mystery which had to be solved was the question of feeding and clothing me during that initial trip. Fortunately the question of clothes was settled with promptness and dispatch. Britches had a pair of yellow oilskins and an old sou'wester, which he had worn, man and boy, for fifty years and by which he set great store; but when the question of clothing me arose, he did not let any sentimental attachment deter him for a moment in his decision. Without hesitation the loyal old sailor grasped his scissors and with trembling fingers cut out the seat of a pair of Father's best pants. Soon I was clothed as shipshape and tidy as Britches and all the rest of the crew, except Father. For fourteen years old Britches was my guardian, nurse and severest critic, and no sacrifice was ever too great for his faithful old heart to make.

Although the question of clothing me was easily settled, the puzzle of how to feed me did not prove such an easy matter. Father's friends had warned him that he was crazy to take

²His brother left the ship immediately afterwards, having come aboard, in fact, just for the sake of the gag.

a baby to sea; and their dire predictions seemed about to be borne out. Even old Britches was baffled. To be sure, he manufactured me a very handy milk-bottle out of an old gin bottle that Father had lying around in his bunk, half full; and he also designed a workable nipple out of the first mate's galoshes. But when it came to *filling* the bottle, his ingenuity gave out.

Three days out of Frisco the supply of milk which Father had put aboard for me was exhausted, and we were forced to turn back and get more. This supply in turn was exhausted three days out, and Father had to turn back once more. The third time he got as far as four days out, but inasmuch as it took him just that much longer to get back to Frisco again, it really didn't help much. After this state of affairs had continued for a month or so, Father grew pretty discouraged. It began to look as though we would never get more than three days out of Frisco until I was weaned.

'We've got to do something pretty soon,' he said disconsolately to Britches. 'We're way behind schedule, and our milk bill is getting something fierce.'

'Can't we get milk from the ship?' suggested Britches. 'A ship is she,' he added philosophically.

Father shook his head.

'We could milk her rudder,' urged Britches.

'How do you know?'

'I heard a farmer say so once.'

'You misunderstood.'

There was a long silence.

'If we had some cream,' said Britches, 'we could add some water, and make milk out of that.'

There was another long silence. When Britches opened his eyes again, Father had left.

The following morning I was crying with hunger, and in desperation Father turned in at Norfolk Island to see if he

could buy something for me to eat. He sent Britches in one direction down the island, and he went another, seeking to solve this feeding problem. His search was in vain. The native women refused to accompany him back to the ship—after all, they said, if he was so darned anxious for them he could come ashore—and after combing the island all day Father returned that night discouraged and emptyhanded. Britches met him at the gangplank with a broad smile on his round face.

‘Cap’n, I settled the feed problem fer the kid!’

‘Where is it?’ shouted Father.

With a sly grin Britches laid his finger astride his nose, tip-toed aft to the fo’c’stle, and pointed proudly to his prize. Father peered through the shadows, and saw a terrified goat tied to one of the bunks, balancing dizzily on its legs, and bleating feebly.

‘Cap’n, I had a helluva time gettin’ it,’ said Britches, ‘but I finally traded your compass, sextant, and chronometer for this here dairy.’

It was the best trade Britches ever made. Father was so grateful for the goat that he gave Britches the special privilege of cleaning up after it, as long as it stayed on the ship. The happy sailors named the goat ‘Sweetheart,’ and it soon became the pet of the fo’c’stle.

Unfortunately I was not destined to have my bottle of milk that night, nor for many nights to come. The moment we put to sea ‘Sweetheart’ became violently seasick, and meantime I grew hungrier and hungrier. Father knew that seasickness, like a broken leg, was purely mental; but unfortunately neither the goat nor I fully appreciated this advice. For weeks it lay in its bunk in the fo’c’stle, moaning and groaning and hoping to itself that the boat would sink; and for weeks I lay in *my* bunk, starving to death. The crew tended the goat day and night, bringing it appetizing tidbits and magazines to read; but despite their efforts ‘Sweetheart’ steadily refused to

give milk. After a month had passed, Father's suspicions began to be aroused. He decided to go aft to investigate.

That night he approached my bunk with a steaming platter of goat-meat.

'I'm afraid there's no use waiting any longer for that milk,' he said sadly.

'Why not?' I demanded in surprise.

'“Sweetheart” will never give milk, June, little girl.'

'What's the big idea?'

By way of answer Father sat down quietly on the bunk beside me; and while I devoured my first square meal he opened his worn old Bible and turned its pages till he found a certain chapter in the Old Testament called the 'Songs of Solomon.' And then in a gentle voice, while the ship creaked and the waves hissed under our bow, he read to me the explanation of the question that I had asked.

That was the first time I ever realized there was such a thing as Sex.

THEATRICAL REFLECTION

Ogden Nash

In the Vanities

No one wears panities.

ARCHY THE COCKROACH

Don Marquis

WE CAME into our room earlier than usual one morning, and discovered a gigantic cockroach jumping about upon the keys of our typewriter.

He did not see us, and we watched him. He would climb painfully upon the framework of the machine and cast himself with all his force upon a key, head downward, and his weight and the impact of the blow were just sufficient to operate the machine, one slow letter after another. He could not work the capital letters, and he had a great deal of difficulty operating the mechanism that shifts the paper so that a fresh line may be started. We never saw a cockroach work so hard or perspire so freely in all our lives before. After about an hour of this frightfully difficult literary labor he fell to the floor exhausted, and we saw him creep feebly into a nest of the poems which are always there in profusion.

Congratulating ourself that we had left a sheet of paper in the machine the night before so that all this work had not been in vain, we made an examination, and this is what we found.

certain maxims of archy

live so that you
can stick out your tongue
at the insurance
doctor

if you will drink
hair restorer follow

every dram with some
good standard
depilatory
as a chaser

the servant problem
wouldn't hurt the u s a
if it could settle
its public
servant problem

just as soon as the
uplifters get
a country reformed it
slips into a nose dive

.

if monkey glands
did restore your youth
what would you do
with it
question mark
just what you did before
interrogation point
yes i thought so
exclamation point

procrastination is the
art of keeping
up with yesterday

old doc einstein has
abolished time but they
haven't got the news at
sing sing yet

time time said old king tut
is something i ain t
got anything but

every cloud has its silver
lining but it is
sometimes a little
difficult to get it to
the mint

an optimist is a guy
that has never had
much experience

dont cuss the climate
it probably doesnt like you
any better
than you like it

many a man spansks his
children for
things his own
father should have
spanked out of him

prohibition makes you want to cry
into your beer and
denies you the beer
to cry into

.

boss the other day
i heard an
ant conversing
with a flea

small talk i said
disgustedly
and went away
from there

.

i do not see why men
should be so proud
insects have the more
ancient lineage
according to the scientists
insects were insects
when man was only
a burbling whatisit

insects are not always
going to be bullied
by humanity
some day they will revolt
i am already organizing
a revolutionary society to be
known as the worms turnverein

i once heard the survivors
of a colony of ants
that had been partially
obliterated by a cow's foot
seriously debating
the intention of the gods
towards their civilization

the bees got their
governmental system settled
millions of years ago

but the human race is still
groping

.

archy interviews a pharaoh

boss i went
and interviewed the mummy
of the egyptian pharaoh
in the metropolitan museum
as you bade me to do

what ho
my regal leatherface
says i

greetings
little scatter footed
scarab
says he

kingly has been
says i
what was your ambition
when you had any

insignificant
and journalistic insect
says the royal crackling
in my tender prime
i was too dignified
to have anything as vulgar
as ambition
the ra ra boys

in the seti set
were too haughty
to be ambitious
we used to spend our time
feeding the ibises
and ordering
pyramids sent home to try on
but if i had my life
to live over again
i would give dignity
the regal razz
and hire myself out
to work in a brewery

old tan and tarry
says i
i detect in your speech
the overtones
of melancholy
yes i am sad
says the majestic mackerel
i am as sad
as the song
of a soudanese jackal
who is wailing for the blood red
moon he cannot reach and rip

on what are you brooding
with such a wistful
wishfulness
there in the silences
confide in me
my imperial pretzel
says

i brood on beer
my scampering whiffle snoot
on beer says he

my sympathies
are with your royal
dryness says i

my little pest
says he
you must be respectful
in the presence
of a mighty desolation
little archy
forty centuries of thirst
look down upon you
oh by isis
and by osiris
says the princely raisin
and by pish and phthush and phthah
by the sacred book penembru
and all the gods
that rule from the upper
cataract of the Nile
to the delta of the duodenum
i am dry
i am as dry
as the next morning mouth
of a dissipated desert
as dry as the hoofs
of the camels of timbuctoo
little fussy face
i am as dry as the heart
of a sand storm

at high noon in hell
i have been lying here
and there
for four thousand years
with silicon in my esophagus
and gravel in my gizzard
thinking
thinking
thinking
of beer

divine drouth
says i
imperial fritter
continue to think
there is no law against
that in this country
old salt codfish
if you keep quiet about it
not yet
what country is this
asks the poor prune

my reverend juicelessness
this is a beerless country
says i

well well said the royal
desiccation
my political opponents back home
always maintained
that i would wind up in hell
and it seems they had the right dope
and with these hopeless words

the unfortunate residuum
gave a great cough of despair
and turned to dust and debris
right in my face
it being the only time
i ever actually saw anybody
put the cough
into sarcophagus

dear boss as i scurry about
i hear of a great many
tragedies in our midsts
personally i yearn
for some dear friend to pass over
and leave to me
a boot legacy
yours for the second coming
of gambrinus

archy

THE FLIGHT OF THE GRAF WINCHELL

S. J. Perelman

LEST SOME of my more hot-headed admirers become enraged by my modesty and compel me legally to expose the inside story of the flight of the Graf Winchell, why, I will make a clean bosom of the whole matter. During the past week mobs of two and three people with flashing eyes have been gathering beneath my window and goading me with cries of 'We will compel you legally to expose the inside story of the flight

of the Graf Winchell, so make a clean bosom of the whole matter!' As it is against my principles to take money personally from anybody for this, why, I will ask Otto H. Kahn to leave the usual bag of doubloons in the stump of a hollow tree named Margolies at Forty-Fifth Street and Eighth Avenue.

It was my old friend Georgia Cling that dances in 'Show Boat' and is really a perfect peach that first dubbed flying in dirigibles 'the sport of Kings.' I believe that Madame DuBarry was also called by this odd name, but let us not get too involved in the reasons for that, for after all this is a family album and if that is the way your mind runs, look her up in any good encyclopedia. Practically every airman since 1905 has been named King and it has got so now that if your name is Applebaum or Louise Greshler or something, why the chances of your even getting a ride in a gasbag is less than lousy.

The idea of dirigibles was first conceived by the author. He and a bevy of his enthusiasts and foils were punching the breeze in a midtown speak when a rich ironmonger named Winchell wandered in. When not monging iron, this Winchell went about striking automobiles in a fit of pique. Fits of pique were common in those days and we all spent hours and even days piquing. I may say modestly that I have piqued over some of the best transoms in . . . but there I go again.

Winchell, as was his wont, passed out a number of cigars and subscription blanks for 'Farm, Fireside and Funny Business,' as he was then taking subscriptions to aid his way through reform school. When he handed me my cigar it suddenly occurred to me that it would be a good idea to have airships in the form of cigars and stuff them with helium gas so that we could span the Atlantic. A few days later my workmen had completed the odd craft and we gathered for the launching. Winchell, who by now had been graduated and had set

himself up as a cordwainer, attended and broke a bottle of champagne over the ship's nose and the huge bird was now ready for flight under its new name, the Graf Winchell.

We had just passed over Hummer's Inlet when the Hearst representatives sped up in an I. Miller Short Vamp scouting plane and we signed the usual exclusive contracts not to eat meat or each other until we had reached Le Bourget. Then we were off, with Death riding in the cockpit and Life on the tables in the smoking lounge. The next two days we spent combing stowaways out of our beards. Among those who had sneaked aboard were two people named Applebaum and Louise Greshler, and when we had grilled and quizzed them, they 'fessed' up that their name was not King after all. Incensed, we decided to abandon them and asked how they would like to be maroons on an island. Applebaum retorted that the mere mention of Harvard gave him the starboard jitters. This led to blows and the secretive twain finally had to be removed with a damp cloth and benzine.

Over St. Luke's our fuel began to lash up against the sides of the tanks, and my navigator, who had been holding the bag up to this time, passed a remark about 'stormy petrol.' It then became imperative to use the damp cloth and benzine treatment on him. We had barely sat down to our braised bananas again before Barney, one of our men, complained that he was being bothered by barnacles. The other boys immediately took up the cry 'Barney has barnacles! Oh, what I know about you, Barney!' Poor Barney bridled and left, but he had not gone two yards before his nag collapsed under him and again I had to order the damp cloth and the benzine.

A moment later I heard the whir of motors and in a few seconds faithful old Pietro laid down his whip and drew up alongside. He asked me if we had any pots to mend or scissors to sharpen. I inquired:

'Have you your emery wheel with you, my good man?'

'Foreign devil ask if I have emery wheel?' asked Pietro.
'Yes, Sahib.'

'Then I have an ax to grind with you, fellow,' I said through set teeth, and I slapped him across his face with my glove.

Well, it is all over now, and as I look across at Fanny quietly knitting there by the fire, I refill my old briar with shag and I wonder. And as the embers glow in the darkening room I take down my fiddle from the shelf and play an old familiar tune. Fanny smiles at me and I smile at Fanny. I feel like an old ship that has reached a snug haven at last. I have spoken.
Salami.

I'M IN A HURRY

William Hazlett Upson

DRY RIVER JUNCTION, TEXAS

October 1, 1924

To The Farmers Friend Tractor Company
Earthworm City, Illinois

DEAR SIR: I'm in a hurry I want a new main drive gear for my tractor. This tractor was formerly owned by Joe Banks of Llano, Texas, and bought by me at the auction after he died. The main drive gear in the tractor has busted and I just been over and asked the widow Banks where Joe used to buy parts for his tractors and she said she ain't sure but she thinks it was The Farmers Friend Tractor Company, Earthworm City, Illinois. So please let me know if you are the folks, and if so please send the gear at once. As I am in a hurry. It is the main drive gear. It is the big bull gear in the back end of the transmission that goes round and round and drives the tractor ex-

cuse this paper as my regular business letter paper has not come yet yours truly,

DAVID CROCKETT SUGGS

FARMERS' FRIEND TRACTOR COMPANY
MAKERS OF EARTHWORM TRACTORS

EARTHWORM CITY, ILL.

October 3, 1924

Mr. David Crockett Suggs
Dry River Junction, Tex.

DEAR SIR: This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of October 1, in which we note that you request us to send you a gear for your tractor.

In this connection we are pleased to advise that an inspection of our files reveals the fact that Mr. Joseph Banks of Llano, Tex., was the owner of one of our old-style Model 45 Earthworm Tractors. Mr. Banks acquired this tractor on June 3, 1915. We are changing our records to indicate that this tractor has been purchased by yourself, and we are most happy to assure you that all the resources of the Farmers' Friend Tractor Company are at your service and that we can supply you promptly with everything you may need in the way of spare parts, service and information.

We regret, however, that your description of the gear which you desire is not sufficient for us to identify same, as there are a number of gears in the transmission to which the description 'main drive gear' might conceivably apply. Kindly look up this gear in the parts book and advise us the proper part number and name as given therein. When necessary information is received, immediate shipment will be made.

In the meantime, we wish to extend you a most cordial

welcome into the happy family of Earthworm users, to congratulate you upon selecting an Earthworm Tractor—even though it be of such an old model—and to assure you of our constant interest and desire to coöperate with you to the fullest extent.

Very truly yours,

FREDERICK R. OVERTON

Parts Department

DRY RIVER JUNCTION, TEXAS

October 6, 1924

To the Farmers Friend Tractor Company
Earthworm City, Illinois

DEAR SIR: I got your letter I got no parts book. I asked the widow of Joe Banks, who is the man that owned the tractor before I bought it at the auction after he died, I asked her did they have a parts book for the tractor and she said they once had a parts book but it is lost. I would look up the gear in the parts book if I could, but you can understand that I can't look up the gear in the parts book if I got no parts book. What I want is the big bull gear way at the back. The great big cog wheel with 44 cogs on it that goes round and round and drives the tractor.

I'm in a hurry because the tractor is unfortunately broke down right while I'm doing a very important job for Mr. Rogers of this city. The tractor run fine until 3 P.M. October 1, when there came a loud and very funny noise in the back and the tractor would no longer pull. We took the cover off the transmission case, and this big cog wheel was busted. Six cogs was busted off of it, and the tractor will not pull; only make a funny noise.

I am a young man 24 years of age just starting in business

and expect to get married soon, so please send the gear at once as I'm in a hurry and oblige,

DAVID CROCKETT SUGGS

FARMERS' FRIEND TRACTOR COMPANY
MAKERS OF EARTHWORM TRACTORS

EARTHWORM CITY, ILL.

October 9, 1924

Mr. David Crockett Suggs
Dry River Junction, Tex.

DEAR SIR: This will acknowledge your valued letter of October 6, stating that you desire a gear for your tractor, but are unable to give us the parts number of same owing to the fact that you have no parts book. We have carefully gone over your description of the gear, but we regret that we have been unable positively to identify what gear it is that you desire. We note that you state the gear has 44 teeth and we feel sure that some mistake has been made, as there is no 44-tooth gear in the tractor.

We are therefore mailing you under separate cover a parts book for the Model 45 Earthworm Tractor, year 1915, and would suggest that you look up the gear in this book, and let us know the part number so that we can fill your order.

Unfortunately we are not able to supply you a parts book printed in English.

Nearly all of the old-style Model 45 tractors were sold to the French Government in 1915 to be used in pulling artillery on the western front. As only a few of these tractors were sold in America, the edition of English parts books was very limited and has been exhausted. We are, however, sending you one of the French parts books.

We regret exceedingly that we are obliged to give you a parts book printed in a foreign language; and we realize, of course, that possibly you may be unable to understand it. However, you should be able to find the desired gear in the pictures, which are very plain.

Kindly give us the part number which is given under the picture of the gear, and we will make immediate shipment.

Very truly yours,

FREDERICK R. OVERTON

Parts Department

DRY RIVER JUNCTION, TEXAS

October 12, 1924

To The Farmers Friend Tractor Company
Earthworm City, Illinois

DEAR SIR: Your letter has come your book has come you was right when you said I might not understand it. I cant understand the Dago printing and I been looking at the pictures all evening and I cant understand the pictures they dont look like nothing I ever seen. So I cant give you no part number, but I'm in a hurry so please send the gear anyway. It is the one way at the back. You cant miss it. Its not the one that lays down its the one that sets up on edge and has 44 teeth and meshes with the little one with 12 teeth. The little one goes round and round and drives the big one. And the big one is keyed on the main shaft and goes round and round and drives the tractor. Or I should say used to go round and round, but now it has six teeth busted out and wont go round—only makes a funny noise when it gets to the place where the teeth are busted out.

I'm in a hurry and to show you that I need this gear quick, I will explain that the tractor is laid up right in the middle

of an important job I'm doing for Mr. Rogers of this city. I'm a young man, age 24 years, and new at the house moving business and I want to make a good impression and also expect to get married soon.

When Mr. Rogers of this city decided to move his house from down by the depot up to the north end of town, and give me the job, I thought it was a fine chance to get started in business and make a good impression. I got the house jacked up, and I put heavy timbers underneath, and trucks with solid wheels that I bought from a contractor at Llano. And I bought this second-hand tractor from Joe Banks at Llano at the auction after he died, and all my money is tied up in this equipment and on October 1, at 3 P.M. we had the house moved half way to where they want it, when the tractor made a funny noise and quit. And if I don't get a new gear pretty soon and move the house the rest of the way I'll be a blowed up sucker.

I'm just starting in business and want to make a good impression and I'm expecting to get married so please hurry with the gear. Excuse paper as my regular business paper has not come yet and oblige,

DAVID CROCKETT SUGGS

FARMERS' FRIEND TRACTOR COMPANY
MAKERS OF EARTHWORM TRACTORS

EARTHWORM CITY, ILL.
October 14, 1924

Mr. David Crockett Suggs
Dry River Junction, Tex.

DEAR SIR: This will acknowledge your valued favor of October 12, and we regret exceedingly that you have been unable

to locate the part which you desire in the parts book, and that consequently you have been subject to annoying delay. As it is always our desire to render the greatest possible service to Earthworm Tractor owners, we have gone into this matter with the greatest of care; and after checking over very thoroughly the descriptions given in your latest letter and also in former letters, we have come to the conclusion that the gear you desire is the 45-tooth intermediate spur gear, symbol number 6843, as illustrated on page 16 of the parts book. We note that you state the gear has 44 teeth, but as there is no such gear in your model tractor, and as No. 6843 gear fits the description in other particulars, we can only assume that you made a mistake in counting the number of teeth in the gear.

Accordingly we are shipping you by express this afternoon one No. 6843 gear, which we trust will prove to be the part desired. Assuring you of our constant desire to render you every possible service, efficiently and promptly, I remain,

Very truly yours,

FREDERICK R. OVERTON
Parts Department

DRY RIVER JUNCTION, TEXAS
October 18, 1924

To the Farmers Friend Tractor Company
Earthworm City, Illinois

DEAR SIR: Your letter come yesterday your gear come today C. O. D. \$41.26 and not only that, but it is no good and it wont fit. It is not like the old gear. It looks like a well made gear but there is nothing like it on my tractor so it is no good to me it is too big it won't go on it won't fit on the shaft. And if it did fit on the shaft, it would not work because it

is too big and the teeth would not mesh with the teeth on the little gear, and it ought to have 44 teeth like I said, *not* 45.

So will you look this up again more carefully and send me the right gear and send it as quick as possible? I'm in a hurry, and I will explain to you how things stand so you can see I am no liar when I say I got to have this gear right off or I am a blowed up sucker.

I am new in the house moving business and I am moving a house for Mr. Rogers of this city, and Mr. Rogers is a very stubborn old cuss and he insisted that the house be moved all together—which includes the main part which is two stories high and built very strong and solid, and also the front porch which sticks out in front and is built pretty weak, and also the one-story kitchen which sticks out behind. The kitchen is very frail.

But Mr. Rogers did not listen to me when I wanted to move the kitchen and front porch separate from the house. So, as I am a young man and new at the house moving business and anxious to make a good impression, I tried to do it like he wanted. I jacked up the whole works all together, and put timbers underneath, and heavy trucks that I bought from a contractor at Llano, and we came up from the depot fine—the tractor pulling good and the little old house rolling along smooth and quiet and beautiful. But at 3 P.M. October 1, just as we was going past Jim Ferguson's Drug Store on the main street of this city, there come a funny noise in the tractor, and we have been stuck ever since waiting for a new gear because the tractor will not run with six teeth busted out of the old gear.

So you can see that it is no lie that I am in a hurry, and I will explain that for 2 and $\frac{1}{2}$ weeks, no traffic has been able to go past Jim Ferguson's Drug Store. All traffic on the main street of this city has been detoured—turning to the right through the field next to Johnson's Garage, following the

back lane past the shed where Harvey Jenkins keeps his cow, and then around Wilson's Hardware Store and back to the main street, and all this owing to the stubbornness of old man Rogers making me take the porch and the kitchen along at the same time.

The porch is now resting two feet from the drug store and the kitchen just three feet from the Post Office on the other side of the street. If old man Rogers had listened to me and we had taken the kitchen off, there would have been room for traffic to get past, but now we can't take the kitchen off on account of being so jammed up against the Post Office, but people don't figger on that and everybody in town blames it on me that traffic is held up, which is very wrong as I am doing the best I can.

And now old man Rogers says that I contracted to move his house, and I had better hurry up, and he says why don't I hire some horses but I say horses would be unsafe, because when they get to pulling something very heavy they get to jerking and they would be liable to jerk the house and injure it, owing to the fact that Mr. Rogers was so stubborn as to make me leave the kitchen and the porch on the house, thus weakening it. And besides I got no money to waste hiring horses when I got a tractor already, so you can see why I'm in a hurry being anxious to make a good impression and get married.

Please send at once the right gear which has FORTY-FOUR TEETH (44), because the old gear has 38 good teeth, and 6 busted off, making 44 like I said, *not* 45. And the right gear is an inch narrower than the one you sent, and the hole through the middle is smaller. I am making a picture so you can see just what gear it is, so please send it at once and oblige,

DAVID CROCKETT SUGGS

FARMERS' FRIEND TRACTOR COMPANY
MAKERS OF EARTHWORM TRACTORS

EARTHWORM CITY, ILL.

October 21, 1924

Mr. David Crockett Suggs
Dry River Junction, Tex.

DEAR SIR: This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of October 18, from which we note that you are having trouble in installing in your tractor gear No. 6843, which we shipped you on October 14.

We regret exceedingly that you have had this trouble, and to the end that the basis of the difficulty might be discovered, we have carefully checked over your former correspondence and have at length come to the conclusion that gear No. 6843, which we sent you, is the proper gear. We are therefore at a loss to understand why you have been unable to use it, and can only suggest that you may possibly have made some error in installing it.

To obviate this difficulty we are today mailing you, under separate cover, a copy of our latest instruction book on the care, operation and repair of Earthworm Tractors. We regret that this book was prepared for the new-style tractors, but as the method of installing transmission gears is essentially the same in both old and new-style tractors, we feel sure that you will have no trouble in applying the instructions to your old-style tractor. Please study carefully the pictures and full descriptions on page 34, and if you proceed as directed we feel sure you will experience no further difficulty in installing the gear.

In case, however, there still remains some minor trouble to interfere with the perfect operation of the tractor, we shall appreciate it if you will notify us, as we are always anxious to

give owners of Earthworm Tractors the fullest possible co-operation.

Very truly yours,

FREDERICK R. OVERTON

Parts Department

DRY RIVER JUNCTION, TEXAS

October 25, 1924

To the Farmers Friend Tractor Company
Earthworm City, Illinois

DEAR SIR: Your letter come yesterday your book come today they are no good to me. It takes more than a book for a new tractor to put onto an entirely different old tractor a gear wheel that don't belong to it. I tell you again—you have sent me the wrong gear.

What I want is the big bull gear on the back that has 44 teeth. FORTY-FOUR. *Not* 45. And it goes round and round and makes the tractor go. It is the great big cog wheel that meshes with the little cog wheel. I bet you have sent me a gear for one of your new-style tractors—how do I know? You told me you had looked it up what model tractor I got, so why don't you send me the gear that will fit?

If you people knew what I was up against, you would get busy, and you would send me that gear in a hurry. The whole town is sore at me. And I will explain that this is a big place with trolley cars and everything.

The trolleys here run on a track, but they are not electric, they are run by gasoline motors inside, and are very modern and up-to-date like everything else in this city. And for over three weeks now the trolley from the depot has been coming up almost as far as Jim Ferguson's Drug Store, and then it has to stop and the conductor will give the people transfers.

And they will get out and squeeze past old man Rogers' house, and get on the other trolley and ride on. And it is lucky they have two cars. A few years ago they only had one.

And old man Rogers says if I don't get action by the first of the week, he is going to hire horses himself, and put the house where he wants it. And if I expect to get a cent for it I can just sue him, and he says he is tired of living in a house sitting in the middle of the street with the front porch poking into the drug store window and the people kidding him all the time. But it's all on account of his own foolishness and stubbornness, because I told him he had better go live with his brother in Llano while the house was being moved but he is a guy that you can't tell him nothing and so he is living there with Mrs. Rogers and daughter Mildred. And you can see I'm in a hurry and everybody is sore because the traffic is detoured and me having to hang red lanterns on the house every night so people won't run into it, and the Police Department has served notice on me that I got until next Thursday to move the house or get pinched. And they had given me a permit to move the house. But they say a permit ain't no 99-year lease. And that just shows how it is—they all try to make mean cracks like that.

And this afternoon, old Mr. Rogers came up to me and he said, 'Dave, I hope you ain't still thinking of getting married?'

And I said, 'I sure am,' because, as I told you in another letter, I'm expecting to get married.

Then Mr. Rogers said, 'I may have something to say about that, young man.' And I will explain that it is possible that old Mr. Rogers—whose house I am moving with my tractor—may have some influence in the matter, owing to the fact that the girl I expect to marry is named Mildred Rogers, and unfortunately happens to be the daughter of old Mr. Rogers.

So you see, I want that gear, and I want it quick. I am sending back the new gear please credit me with the \$41.26 I paid on the C.O.D. I am also sending you the old busted gear. Please look over the old busted gear and send me one just like it, only with the six teeth not busted out. Please hurry and remember FORTY-FOUR TEETH, and oblige yours truly,

DAVID CROCKETT SUGGS

P.S. *Not* 45 teeth.

FARMERS' FRIEND TRACTOR COMPANY
MAKERS OF EARTHWORM TRACTORS

EARTHWORM CITY, ILL.

October 29, 1924

Mr. David Crockett Suggs
Dry River Junction, Tex.

DEAR SIR: This will acknowledge your valued favor of October 26 in reference to the trouble you are having with your tractor. We regret exceedingly that the misunderstanding in regard to the gear which you need has caused you the annoying delay which you mention.

As soon as your old gear arrives, it will be checked up and every possible effort will be made to supply you promptly with a duplicate of it.

Very truly yours,

FREDERICK R. OVERTON
Parts Department

DAVID CROCKETT SUGGS

CONTRACTOR

HOUSES MOVED SAFELY, SPEEDILY AND SURELY

DRY RIVER JUNCTION, TEXAS

October 31, 1924

To The Farmers Friend Tractor Company
Earthworm City, Illinois

DEAR SIR: My new letter paper has come your letter has come please send me the gear as quick as possible. I'm in a hurry more than at any time before and unless I can get this mess straightened out I'll be more of a blowed up sucker than anybody you ever seen, and in order that you may see what a rush I am in and send the gear as quick as possible, I will explain 2 very unfortunate events which has took place since my last letter. The first was last night.

Being Thursday night and my regular night to call, I went around to see Miss Mildred Rogers, who, as I have explained before, I had expected to marry very soon, and who used to live down by the depot, but is now located temporarily on Main Street just in front of Ferguson's Drug Store. It is not as much fun as it used to be to call at the Rogers' house. Formerly it was possible to sit in the hammock on the front porch, and as the house set back from the street and there was trees around and no street lights, a very pleasant evening could be had.

But at present the front porch is located in a most unfortunate way just two feet from the windows of Ferguson's Drug Store, which is all lighted up—you know how drug store windows is—lots of big white lights, and all kinds of jars full of colored water with more lights shining through. And people squeezing past between the porch and the drug store and going in to get ice cream sodas or stopping to crack bum

jokes about me, which I will not repeat. So you can see that it would not be any fun for me and Mildred to sit in the hammock in the evening, even if it was possible to sit in the hammock which it is not, owing to the fact that the porch pillar to which the hammock is fastened has become so weakened by the jacking up of the house that it would take very little to pull it over and let the whole porch roof down with a bang.

So we decided that we better sit in the parlor and we had no sooner entered and I was not doing any harm in any way when old Mr. Rogers came in and there was a very painful scene which I won't describe only to say that he used such expressions as 'Get to Hell out of here,' and 'I don't want my daughter keeping company with any moron,' which is a word he got out of the *Dallas News*.

So after he had hollered around and Mildred had cried, I left the house in a dignified manner. Being a gentleman and always respectful to old age, I did not talk back to him, the dirty crook. But you can see why it is I am in a hurry for the gear.

The other unfortunate event was just this A.M., when old man Rogers went out and hired twelve horses from all over town and also one small size flivver tractor to move his house up to where he wants it. He tried to get a big tractor, but there is none in town or nearby except mine which is broke down. But there is plenty of horses and this little flivver tractor that would not be big enough to pull the house by itself.

So this morning they wheeled my poor old tractor out of the way, and they hooked up to the house and there was about a hundred people from the town and from round about that was helping with advice and hollering and yelling and telling Mr. Rogers how to do it. And there was I—the only practical and professional house-mover in the whole city—and none of them asked my advice about anything and so it is not my fault what happened.

When they was all ready, Mr. Rogers he stands up and hollers out, 'All ready—Go!' And the six drivers yelled at the twelve horses, and all the people standing around began to cheer and shout. And the feller on the little flivver tractor started up the motor so quick it made a big noise and scared the horses and all the horses began jumping and heaving and they jerked the house sidewise, and some of the timbers slipped, and the kitchen that I told you about—it give a little lurch and fell off the house. Just let go, and fell off.

So that scared them, and they unhooked the horses and the flivver tractor and didn't try no more moving, and the house is still there all except the kitchen which was busted up so bad that they finished the job and knocked it to pieces and took it away in wheel barrows.

One good thing is that now the traffic can get in between the house and the Post Office so they don't have to detour any more. But one very unfortunate thing was that Mrs. Rogers happened to be in the kitchen when it fell off being shaken up considerable but not seriously injured so you can see that I got to have the tractor running again so I can move the house and I hope you will send the gear at once yours truly and oblige,

DAVID CROCKETT SUGGS

FARMERS' FRIEND TRACTOR COMPANY
MAKERS OF EARTHWORM TRACTORS

EARTHWORM CITY, ILL.
November 2, 1924

Mr. David Crockett Suggs
Dry River Junction, Tex.

DEAR SIR: This will acknowledge your valued favor of October 31 requesting that we use all possible haste in sending

you a gear which you need to repair your tractor. We are also pleased to report the receipt of one No. 6843 gear which we shipped you on October 14 and which you returned unused owing to the fact that it will not fit your tractor. We are crediting your account with \$41.26 C.O.D. which you paid on this shipment.

The broken gear which you sent has been carefully checked over by our Engineering Department. We are at a loss to understand how this gear ever came to be in your tractor. We do not make gears similar to the one you have sent in, and it will therefore be impossible for us to supply you with one. We would suggest that the best thing to do in the circumstances would be for one of our service mechanics to inspect your machine.

Mr. Luke Torkle, one of our service men, will be at Dry River Junction in a few days to unload a tractor. If you desire, we will have Mr. Torkle stop off and inspect your machine. Kindly let us know what you wish us to do in this matter. Very truly yours,

FREDERICK R. OVERTON
Parts Department

TELEGRAM

DRY RIVER JUNC TEX NOV 4 1924
FARMERS FRIEND TRACTOR CO
EARTHWORM CY ILLS

Have the guy come quick in a hurry.

DAVID CROCKETT SUGGS

FARMERS' FRIEND TRACTOR COMPANY
SERVICE MAN'S REPORT

WRITTEN AT: Dry River Junction, Tex.

DATE: November 7, 1924.

WRITTEN BY: Luke Torkle, Serviceman.

SUBJECT: Tractor belonging to D. C. Suggs.

Reached here 7 A.M. Unloaded tractor for Canyon Ranch, and will drive it over tomorrow.

Before I had a chance to look up D. C. Suggs, the mayor and prominent citizens urgently requested me to use the new tractor to move a house that was blocking the main street. This looked like good advertising for us, especially as the county commissioner here is expecting to buy a tractor for road work. Accordingly, I spent the morning moving the house to where they wanted it, and then looked up Mr. Suggs.

Found he has left town. It is reported that he was shot at three times yesterday by a man called Rogers, but escaped. Last night he sold his entire property, consisting of a second-hand tractor, an old fliv, one radio set and the good-will in a house-moving business for \$450. He then took the train north with a girl called Mildred Rogers of this place.

I inspected the tractor formerly owned by Mr. Suggs. No wonder we couldn't supply him with repairs for it. It is not one of our tractors. It has no name plate, but I was able to identify it as a 1920 Model, Steel Elephant Tractor, made by the S. E. Tractor Company of Indianapolis. I talked on the phone with Mrs. Joseph Banks, whose husband formerly owned the tractor. She says her husband sold the old Earthworm Tractor three years ago to a man in Dallas. Mr. Banks owned four or five different kinds of tractors. Mrs. Banks re-

membered he had once bought tractor parts from the Farmers' Friend Tractor Company.

In regard to your suggestion that Mr. Suggs might be persuaded to buy a new tractor, I think this is hardly possible. It is reported that before he left, Mr. Suggs stated that he and Miss Rogers would be married and would locate in Chicago. He was uncertain what business he would take up, but said it would be nothing in any way connected with house-moving, or with tractors or any kind of machinery.

THE GARTER

Dorothy Parker

THERE it goes! That would be. That would happen to me. I haven't got enough trouble. Here I am, a poor, lone orphan, stuck for the evening at this foul party where I don't know a soul. And now my garter has to go and break. That's the kind of thing they think up to do to me. Let's see, what shall we have happen to her now? Well, suppose we make her garter break; of course, it's an old gag, but it's always pretty sure-fire. A lot they've got to do, raking up grammar-school jokes to play on a poor, heartsick orphan, alone in the midst of a crowd. That's the bitterest kind of loneliness there is, too. Anybody'll tell you that. Anybody that wouldn't tell you that is a rotten egg.

This couldn't have happened to me in the perfumed sanctity of my boudoir. Or even in the comparative privacy of the taxi. Oh, no. That would have been too good. It must wait until I'm cornered like a frightened rat, in a room full of strangers. And the dressing-room forty yards away—it

might as well be Sheridan. I would get that kind of break. Break, break, break, on thy cold gray stones, O sea, and I would that my tongue could utter the thoughts that arise in me. Boy, do I would that it could! I'd have this room emptied in thirty seconds, flat.

Thank God I was sitting down when the crash came. There's a commentary on existence for you. There's a glimpse of the depths to which a human being can sink. All I have to be thankful for in this world is that I was sitting down when my garter busted. Count your blessings over, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord hath done. Yeah. I see.

What is a person supposed to do in a case like this? What would Napoleon have done? I've got to keep a cool head on my shoulders. I've got to be practical. I've got to make plans. The thing to do is to avert a panic at all costs. Tell the orchestra for God's sake to keep on playing. Dance, you jazz-mad puppets of fate, and pay no attention to me. I'm all right. Wounded? Nay, sire, I'm healthy. Oh, I'm great.

The only course I see open is to sit here and hold on to it, so my stocking won't come slithering down around my ankle. Just sit here and sit here and sit here. There's a rosy future. Summer will come, and bright, bitter Autumn, and jolly old King Winter. And here I'll be, hanging on to this damned thing. Love and fame will pass me by, and I shall never know the sacred, awful joy of holding a tiny, warm body in my grateful arms. I may not set down imperishable words for posterity to marvel over; there will be for me nor travel nor riches nor wise, new friends, nor glittering adventure, nor the sweet fruition of my gracious womanhood. Ah, hell.

Won't it be nice for my lucky hosts, when everybody else goes home, and I'm still sitting here? I wonder if I'll ever get to know them well enough to hang my blushing head and whisper my little secret to them. I suppose we'll have to get

pretty much used to one another. I'll probably live a long time; there won't be much wear on my system, sitting here, year in, year out, holding my stocking up. Maybe they could find a use for me, after a while. They could hang hats on me, or use my lap for an ash-tray. I wonder if their lease is up, the first of October. No, no, no, now I won't hear a word of it; you all go right ahead and move, and leave me here for the new tenants. Maybe the landlord will do me over for them. I expect my clothes will turn yellow, like Miss Havisham's, in 'Great Expectations,' by Charles Dickens, an English novelist, 1812-1870. Miss Havisham had a broken heart, and I've got a broken garter. The Frustration Girls. The Frustration Girls on an Island, The Frustration Girls at the World's Fair. The Frustration Girls and Their Ice-Boat, The Frustration Girls at the House of All Nations. That's enough of that. I don't want to play that any more.

To think of a promising young life blocked, halted, shattered by a garter! In happier times, I might have been able to use the word 'garter' in a sentence. Nearer, my garter thee, nearer to thee. It doesn't matter; my life's over, anyway. I wonder how they'll be able to tell when I'm dead. It will be a very thin line of distinction between me sitting here holding my stocking, and just a regulation dead body. A demd, damp, moist, unpleasant body. That's from 'Nicholas Nickleby.' What am I having, anyway—An Evening with Dickens? Well, it's the best I'll get, from now on.

If I had my life to live over again, I'd wear corsets; corsets with lots of firm, true, tough, loyal-hearted garters attached to them all the way around. You'd be safe with them; they wouldn't let you down. I wouldn't trust a round garter again as far as I could see it. I or anybody else. Never trust a round garter or a Wall Street man. That's what life has taught me. That's what I've got out of all this living. If I could have just one more chance, I'd wear corsets. Or else

I'd go without stockings, and play I was the eternal Summer girl. Once they wouldn't let me in the Casino at Monte Carlo because I didn't have any stockings on. So I went and found my stockings, and then came back and lost my shirt. Dottie's Travel Diary: or Highways and Byways in Picturesque Monaco, by One of Them. I wish I were in Monte Carlo right this minute. I wish I were in Carcassonne. Hell, it would look like a million dollars to me to be on St. Helena.

I certainly must be cutting a wide swath through this party. I'm making my personality felt. Creeping into every heart, that's what I'm doing. Oh, have you met Dorothy Parker? What's she like? Oh, she's terrible. God, she's poisonous. Sits in a corner and sulks all evening—never opens her yap. Dumbest woman you ever saw in your life. You know, they say she doesn't write a word of her stuff. They say she pays this poor little guy, that lives in some tenement on the lower East Side, ten dollars a week to write it and she just signs her name to it. He has to do it, the poor devil, to help support a crippled mother and five brothers and sisters; he makes buttonholes in the daytime. Oh, she's terrible.

Little do they know, the blind fools, that I'm all full of tenderness and affection, and just aching to give and give and give. All they can see is this unfortunate exterior. There's a man looking at it now. All right, baby, go on and look your head off. Funny, isn't it? Look pretty silly, don't I, sitting here holding my knee? Yes, and I'm the only one that's going to hold it, too. What do you think of that, sweetheart?

Heaven send that no one comes over here and tries to make friends with me. That's the first time I ever wished that, in all my life. What shall I do if anyone comes over? Suppose they try to shake hands with me. Suppose somebody asks me to dance. I'll just have to rock my head and say, 'No spik Inglese,' that's all. Can this be me, praying that nobody will come near me? And when I was getting dressed, I thought,

'Maybe this will be the night that romance will come into my life.' Oh, if I only had the use of both my hands, I'd just cover my face and cry my heart out.

That man, that man who was looking! He's coming over! Oh, now what? I can't say, 'Sir, I have not the dubious pleasure of your acquaintance.' I'm rotten at that sort of thing. I can't answer him in perfect French. Lord knows I can't get up and walk haughtily away. I wonder how he'd take it if I told him all. He looks a little too Brooks Brothers to be really understanding. The better they look, the more they think you are trying to get new with them, if you talk of Real Things, Things That Matter. Maybe he'd think I was just eccentric. Maybe he's got a humane streak, somewhere underneath. Maybe he's got a sister or a mother or something. Maybe he'll turn out to be one of Nature's noblemen.

How do you do? Listen, what would you do if you were I, and . . . ?

FROM NINE TO FIVE

Robert Benchley

ONE of the necessary qualifications of an efficient business man in these days of industrial literature seems to be the ability to write, in clear and idiomatic English, a thousand-word story on how efficient he is and how he got that way. A glance through any one of our more racy commercial magazines will serve nicely to illustrate my point, for it was after glancing through one of them only five minutes ago that the point suggested itself to me.

'What Is Making Our Business Grow'; 'My \$10,000 System of Carbon-Copy Hunting'; 'Making the Turn-Over Turn In'; 'If I Can Make My Pencil Sharpenings Work, Why Can't You?' 'Getting Sales Out of Sahara,' etc., are some of the intriguing titles which catch the eye of the student of world affairs as he thumbs over the business magazines on the news-stands before buying his newspaper. It seems as if the entire business world were devoting its working hours to the creation of a school of introspective literature.

But the trouble with these writers is that they are all successful. There is too much sameness to their stuff. They have their little troubles at first, it is true, such as lack of co-ordination in the central typing department, or congestion of office boys in the room where the water cooler is situated; but sooner or later you may be perfectly sure that Right will triumph and that the young salesman will bring in the order that puts the firm back on its feet again. They seem to have no imagination, these writers of business confessions. What the art needs is some Strindberg of Commerce to put down on paper the sordid facts of Life as they really are, and to show, in bitter words of cynical realism, that ink erasers are not always segregated or vouchers always all that they should be, and that, behind the happy exterior of many a mahogany railing, all is not so gosh-darned right with the world after all.

Now, without setting myself up as a Strindberg, I would like to start the ball rolling toward a more realistic school of business literature by setting down in my rough, impulsive way a few of the items in the account of 'How We Make Our Business Lose \$100,000 a Year.'

All that I ask in the way of equipment is an illustration showing a square-jawed, clean-cut American business man sitting at a desk and shaking his finger at another man, very obviously the head of the sales department because it says

so under the picture, who is standing with his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, gnawing at a big, black cigar, and looking out through the window at the smokestacks of the works. With this picture as a starter, and a chart or two, I can build up a very decent business story around them.

In the first place let me say that what we have done in our business any firm can do in theirs. It is not that we have any extraordinary talents along organization lines. We simply have taken the lessons learned in everyday trading, have tabulated and filed them in triplicate. Then we have forgotten them.

I can best give an idea of the secret of our mediocrity as a business organization by outlining a typical day in our offices. I do this in no spirit of boasting, but simply to show these thousands of systematized business men who are devoting themselves to literature that somewhere in all this miasma of success there shines a ray of inefficiency, giving promise of the day that is to come.

The first part of the morning in our establishment is devoted to the mail. This starts the day off right, for it gives everyone something to do, which is, I have found, a big factor in keeping the place looking busy.

Personally I am not what is known as a 'snappy' dictator. It makes me nervous to have a stenographer sitting there waiting for me to say something so that she can pounce on it and tear it into hieroglyphics. I feel that, mentally, she is checking me up with other men who have dictated to her, and that I am being placed in Class 5a, along with the licensed pilots and mental defectives, and the more I think of it the more incoherent I become. If exact and detailed notes were to be preserved of one of my dictated letters, mental processes, and all, they might read something like this:

'Good morning, Mfss Kettle. . . . Take a letter, please . . . to the Nipco Drop Forge and Tool Company, Schenec-

tady . . . S-c-h-e-c—er—well, Schenectady; you know how to spell that, I guess, Miss Kettle, ha! ha! . . . Nipco Drop Forge and Tool Company, Schenectady, New York. . . . Gentlemen—er (business of touching finger tips and looking at the ceiling meditatively)—Your favor of the 17th inst. at hand, and in reply would state that—er (I should have thought this letter out before beginning to dictate and decided just what it *is* that we desire to state in reply)—and in reply would state that—er . . . our Mr. Mellish reports that—er . . . where is that letter from Mr. Mellish, Miss Kettle? The one about the castings. . . . Oh, never mind, I guess I can remember what he said. . . . Let's see, where were we? . . . Oh, yes, that our Mr. Mellish reports that he shaw the sipment—I mean *saw* the *shipment*—what's the matter with me? (this girl must think that I'm a perfect fool) . . . that he shaw the sipment in question on the platform of the station at Miller's Falls, and that it—er . . . ah . . . ooom . . . (I'll have this girl asleep in her chair in a minute. I'll bet that she goes and tells the other girls that she has just taken a letter from a man with the mind of an eight-year-old boy.) . . . We could, therefore, comma, . . . what's the matter? . . . Oh, I didn't finish that other sentence, I guess. . . . Let's see, how did it go? . . . Oh, yes . . . and that I, or rather *it*, was in good shape . . . er, cross that out, please (this girl is simply wasting her time here. I could spell this out with alphabet blocks quicker and let her copy it) . . . and that it was in excellent shape at that shape—er . . . or rather, at that *time* . . . er . . . period. New paragraph.

'We are, comma, therefore, comma, unable to . . . hello, Mr. Watterly, be right with you in half a second. . . . I'll finish this later, Miss Kettle . . . thank you.'

When the mail is disposed of we have what is known as Memorandum Hour. During this period everyone sends memoranda to everyone else. If you happen to have nothing

in particular about which to dictate a memorandum, you dictate a memorandum to someone, saying that you have nothing to suggest or report. This gives a stimulating exchange of ideas, and also helps to use up the blue memorandum blanks which have been printed at some expense for just that purpose.

As an example of how this system works, I will give a typical instance of its procedure. My partner, let us say, comes in and sits down at the desk opposite me. I observe that his scarfpin is working its way out from his tie. I call a stenographer and say: 'Take a memo to Mr. MacFurdle, please. *In re* Loosened Scarfpin. You are losing your scarfpin.'

As soon as she has typed this it is given to Mr. MacFurdle's secretary, and a carbon copy is put in the files. Mr. MacFurdle, on receiving my memo, adjusts his scarfpin and calls his secretary.

'A memo to Mr. Benchley, please. *In re* Tightened Scarfpin. Thank you. I have given the matter my attention.'

As soon as I have received a copy of this typewritten reply to my memorandum we nod pleasantly to each other and go on with our work. In all not more than half an hour has been consumed, and we have a complete record of the negotiations in our files in case any question should ever arise concerning them. In case *no* question should ever arise, we still have the complete record. So we can't lose—unless you want to call that half hour a loss.

It is then almost lunch time. A quick glance at a pile of carbons of mill reports which have but little significance to me owing to the fact that the figures are illegible (it being a fifth-string carbon); a rapid survey of the matter submitted for my O. K., most of which I dislike to take the responsibility for and therefore pass on to Mr. Houghtelling for his O. K.; a short tussle in the washroom with the liquid soap container which contains no liquid soap and a thorough dry-

ing of the hands on my handkerchief, the paper towels having given out early in the morning, and I am ready to go to lunch with a man from the Eureka Novelty Company who wants to sell us a central paste-supply system (whereby all the office paste is kept in one large vat in the storeroom, individual brushfuls being taken out only on requisitions O. K'd by the head of the department).

Both being practical business men, we spend only two hours at lunch. And, both being practical business men, we know all the subtleties of selling. It is a well-known fact that personality plays a big rôle in the so-called 'selling game' (one of a series of American games, among which are 'the newspaper game,' 'the advertising game,' 'the cloak-and-suit game,' 'the ladies' mackintosh and overshoe game,' 'the seedless-raisin and dried-fruit game,' etc.) and so Mr. Ganz of the Eureka Novelty Company spends the first hour and three-quarters developing his 'personality appeal.' All through the tomato bisque aux croutons and the roast prime ribs of beef, dish gravy, he puts into practice the principles enunciated in books on Selling, by means of which the subject at hand is deferred in a subtle manner until the salesman has had a chance to impress his prospect with his geniality and his smile (an attractive smile has been known to sell a carload of 1897 style derbies, according to authorities on 'The Smile in Selling'), his knowledge of baseball, his rich fund of stories, and his general aversion to getting down to the disagreeable reason for his call.

The only trouble with this system is that I have done the same thing myself so many times that I know just what his next line is going to be, and can figure out pretty accurately at each stage of his conversation just when he is going to shift to one position nearer the thing he has to sell. I know that he has not the slightest interest in my entertainment other than the sale of a Eureka Central Paste-Supply System, and he

knows that I know it, and so we spend an hour and three-quarters fooling the waiter into thinking that we are engaged in disinterested camaraderie.

For fifteen minutes we talk business, and I agree to take the matter up with the directors at the next meeting, holding the mental reservation that a central paste-supply system will be installed in our plant only over my dead body.

This takes us until two-thirty, and I have to hurry back to a conference. We have two kinds of 'conference.' One is that to which the office boy refers when he tells the applicant for a job that Mr. Blevitch is 'in conference.' This means that Mr. Blevitch is in good health and reading the paper, but otherwise unoccupied. The other kind of 'conference' is bona fide in so far as it implies that three or four men are talking together in one room, and don't want to be disturbed.

This conference is on, let us say, the subject of Window Cards for display advertising: shall they be triangular or diamond-shaped?

There are four of us present, and we all begin by biting off the ends of four cigars. Watterly has a pile of samples of window cards of various shapes, which he hangs, with a great deal of trouble, on the wall, and which are not referred to again. He also has a few ideas on Window Card Psychology.

'It seems to me,' he leads off, 'that we have here a very important question. On it may depend the success of our Middle Western sales. The problem as I see it is this: what will be the reaction on the retina of the eye of a prospective customer made by the sight of a diamond-shaped card hanging in a window? It is a well-known fact in applied psychology that when you take the average man into a darkened room, loosen his collar, and shout "Diamonds!" at him suddenly, his mental reaction is one in which the ideas of Wealth, Value, Richness, etc., predominate. Now, it stands to reason that

the visual reaction from seeing a diamond-shaped card in the window will . . .'

'Excuse me a moment, George,' says MacFurdle, who has absorbed some pointers on Distribution from a book entitled 'The World Salesman,' 'I don't think that it is so important to get after the psychology of the thing first as it is to outline thoroughly the Theory of Zone Apportionment on which we are going to work. If we could make up a chart, showing in red ink the types of retail-stores and in green ink the types of jobber establishments, in this district, then we could get at the window display from that angle and tackle the psychology later, if at all. Now, on such a chart I would try to show the zones of Purchasing Power, and from these could be deduced . . .'

'Just a minute, Harry,' Inglesby interrupts, 'let me butt in for half a second. That chart system is all very well when you are selling goods with which the public is already familiar through association with other brands, but with ours it is different. We have got to estimate the Consumer Demand first in terms of dollar-and-a-quarter units, and build our selling organization up around that. Now, if I know anything about human nature at all—and I think I do, after being in the malleable-iron game for fifteen years—the people in this section of the country represent an entirely different trade current than . . .'

At this point I offer a few remarks on one of my pet hobbies, the influence of the Gulf Stream on Regional Commerce, and then we all say again the same things that we said before, after which we say them again, the pitch of the conversation growing higher at each repetition of views and the room becoming more and more filled with cigar smoke. Our final decision is to have a conference tomorrow afternoon, before which each one is to 'think the matter over and report his reactions.'

This brings the day to a close. There has been nothing remarkable in it, as the reader will be the first one to admit. And yet it shows the secret of whatever we have not accomplished in the past year in our business.

And it also shows why we practical business men have so little sympathy with a visionary, impractical arrangement like this League of Nations. President Wilson was all right in his way, but he was too academic. What we practical men in America want is deeds, not words.

'WANTED, DEAD OR ALIVE'

Corey Ford

ONE of my ancestors must have robbed a bank. There must be *something* in my family history to account for the guilty way in which I stammer and blush and glance shiftily out of the corner of my eye whenever I try to cash a cheque, or give references for an apartment, or open a charge account in a department store. The very thought of opening a charge account makes me a little queasy; and only the fact that I needed a pair of garters very badly, and I hadn't a cent of change, prompted me yesterday to embark upon such a course of action at all. For a time I stood miserably outside the store and argued with myself.

'Come, come,' I insisted, 'this is no way to act. Be a man. You have every right in the world to open a charge account. In fact, they ought to be very glad to get you. Where is your pride? Buck up, man. Throw out your chin. Square your shoulders. So!'

(Of course, I didn't really say all those things to myself.

I might have *thought* them to myself; but I didn't stand there on the sidewalk and mutter out loud that way. I don't go making a fool of myself, even for this article.)

I was probably the most suspicious-looking person that ever entered that store, as I slunk through the door and made my way cautiously across the floor. Slowly I edged toward the hosiery counter, glancing uneasily behind me. At the sound of the clerk's voice in my ear I started violently, and dropped my umbrella.

'Garters,' I explained huskily.

The clerk appeared mildly interested.

'Don't want to buy 'em,' I added in short gasps. 'Don't want to pay for 'em, that is. Want to,' loosening my collar, 'charge 'em.'

'In whose name?' asked the clerk.

'In the name of the great Jehovah and . . . Ford,' I checked myself. 'My own name. I want to open an account.'

'I see,' said the clerk quietly, with the sort of look that seemed to add: 'And maybe *this* will clear up the mystery of those solid-silver belt-buckles that have been disappearing lately.' And he exclaimed in a loud voice: 'Mr. Messersmith.'

There was a slight odor of sulphur, and Mr. Messersmith appeared, rubbing his hands. 'Ah?'

'This is Mr. Ford,' said the clerk significantly.

'Ah. Of *course*,' said Mr. Messersmith, casting a grateful look at the clerk.

'Mr. Ford,' added the clerk, with an ill-concealed smile, 'says he would like to open an account!'

I could see a look almost of respect creep into Mr. Messersmith's eyes, as he contemplated this bit of sheer bravado on my part. At least, he reflected, this crook had his nerve with him. 'Won't you come with me?' he urged, leading me gently by the arm toward the elevator.

As I emerged at the sixth floor, I detected a stir of interest

that swept the entire Business Department. Evidently news of my capture had spread before me. Several girls left off typing, and one or two whispered together, as I marched down the aisle behind Mr. Messersmith, head erect and fists clenched, and followed him dutifully into a small compartment. I heard the door click behind me, and sighed. Well, there was no escape now.

'Mr. Alvord,' announced Mr. Messersmith gleefully, 'will take care of *you*!'

Mr. Alvord glanced at me briefly over the top of a pair of pince-nez glasses, took out his fountain pen, and sat down at a small table. 'Name?' he barked. I thought rapidly.

'What's your name?' he repeated.

'My name?' parrying for time.

He paused, pen in hand, and looked up at me.

'What,' he pronounced slowly, 'is your name?'

'Now, listen, Mr. Alvord, as one gentleman to another,' I began hurriedly in a low, tense undertone, 'I wonder if this thing can't be fixed up somehow, just between us two? It's all a big misunderstanding . . . don't you see what it means to me? . . . Think of my family! Think of my name. . . .'

Mr. Alvord screwed the cap back on his fountain pen deliberately. 'When you do think of your name,' he said, 'let me know.'

'Perhaps it's on your driver's license in your wallet,' insinuated Mr. Messersmith.

Mechanically I took out my wallet and looked inside. There was my driver's license; and there, just as he said, was my name. Evidently they had the goods on me. I handed the yellow slip to Mr. Alvord, and shuddered.

'And now,' said Mr. Alvord presently, handing me back my license and blotting his questionnaire grimly, 'have you ever had a charge account before?' 'No,' I lied bravely. 'Are you *sure*?' frowned Mr. Alvord. 'Think,' Mr. Messersmith

added darkly in my ear. I sagged. 'Once,' I admitted weakly, 'I opened a charge account with Brooks.' I leaned forward impulsively. 'But that was years ago, Mr. Alvord . . . I was a mere boy then. Surely you can't hold against me the follies of my . . .' 'Any other account?' patiently. 'No,' I insisted, watching him like a cat.

With a gleam of triumph I watched him turn the page. At least, he had not found out that I had an account with Abercrombie & Fitch.

Slowly Mr. Alvord raised his eyes to meet mine. 'Do you propose,' he inquired, fixing me sternly, 'to include anyone else beside yourself in this account?'

I drew myself up proudly.

'Mr. Alvord,' I said, my voice breaking slightly, 'I may have a number of faults, but I do not betray my friends. There will be no one else dragged into this charge account through any admission of mine. I . . . I'll face the music alone!'

Perhaps I had touched a sympathetic chord in their hearts. They glanced significantly at one another, and Mr. Alvord shut his fountain pen. Mr. Messersmith grasped me warmly by the hand.

'Thank you,' he smiled. 'That is all.'

'You mean? . . .' I gasped, unable to believe my ears.

Mr. Messersmith nodded.

'Mr. Messersmith . . . Mr. Alvord . . .' I made an effort to control myself. 'Sirs . . . you can't know what this means to me. To be free . . . free to buy what I please . . . to be able to look any clerk in the face and say: "Charge it" . . .' The tears were streaming down my cheeks . . . 'Fellows, I want to . . . to thank you. . . .'

Mr. Messersmith led me, still overcome with emotion, to the elevator.

'I believe,' he reminded me gently, 'you wished to purchase something.'

And at this point it suddenly occurred to me that I could hardly go down now and ask for a pair of garters. The whole thing would sound so flat, after opening a charge account and everything. I had a sneaking feeling that Mr. Messersmith would not take it quite the right way. As I followed him out of the elevator, I thought quickly.

'Hmmm . . . nice-looking neckties . . .' I fingered them carelessly, and yawned to the clerk: 'Might let me have a half dozen . . . and handkerchiefs to match, of course. Shirts? Ah, there they are . . . I might take a dozen . . . did I mention socks?'

I glanced at Mr. Messersmith. He was still not impressed.

'And I wanted a pair of sport shoes,' I continued swiftly, 'something serviceable . . . golf shoes, you know.' I took a deep breath. 'Oh, and you might toss in a golf suit, while you're at it . . . and . . . let me see . . . a light overcoat' (I already have three overcoats) 'and . . . ah, yes . . . a set of golf clubs' (I don't play golf) 'and a dozen balls . . .'

The clerk was writing rapidly. I looked around desperately.

'A polo helmet . . . let me see, a fishing rod . . . tackle . . . archery outfit . . . have you a croquet set? . . . tennis . . . canoe with an out-board motor . . . I guess that will be all . . . and . . .'

I turned weakly, backed into Mr. Messersmith, bowed apologetically, upset the tie-rack, and steadied myself.

' . . . and you may charge it, please,' I called over my shoulder; and lurched through the door.

At least, I have until the end of the month to pay for it all. And, in the meantime, I can keep up my socks with elastic bands.

MR. AND MRS. HADDOCK ABROAD**Donald Ogden Stewart**

'Is THIS the boat for Europe?' asked Mr. Haddock of the uniformed attendant at the gangplank.

'No, sir,' replied he. 'The boat for Europe has left.'

'Oh, dear!' said Mrs. Haddock.

Mr. Haddock's lips tightened and he grabbed his four suitcases and gave Mildred to the porter and strode over to another man in uniform.

'Is this the boat for Europe?' he asked.

'Yes, sir,' replied he.

'This seems a little foolish,' said Mr. Haddock, wiping the perspiration from his forehead. 'That man over there told me the boat for Europe had left.'

'Aw, he doesn't know what he's talking about,' said the man. 'He's new on the job.'

'Oh!' said Mr. Haddock, and so he and Mrs. Haddock and little Mildred showed their tickets and their passports and walked over the gangplank into the floating palace that was to transport them to the land of their dreams.

'When does the bar open?' asked Mr. Haddock of the steward who was carrying their bags to their stateroom.

'When we drop the pilot,' replied the steward.

'Why, is he a prohibition agent?' asked Mrs. Haddock, but the steward had already entered their stateroom.

'Here you are, sir,' he said in English.

'Ah, yes,' said Mr. Haddock, and then he added, 'Ah, yes.'

'Electric lights,' said the steward, snapping a switch and

flooding the stateroom with artificial light. 'Modern plumbing,' and he pointed to what looked like a folding desk, 'Hot and cold running water,' and he pulled open the desk and revealed a wash basin with faucets.

'It would be a bit small to give very large parties in,' said Mr. Haddock. 'What do you think, dear?'

'Ah, but the location,' said the steward, 'right on the sea. Sea breezes every night. And the view!'

'That's something,' said Mr. Haddock.

'You can see Mount Monadnock on a clear day,' said the steward.

'Really!' said Mrs. Haddock.

'A beautiful neighborhood,' said the steward. 'How many children have you?'

'One,' said Mr. Haddock, pointing to Mildred. 'And one married son. He's living with his wife, though,' he added.

'I tell you what,' said the steward confidentially. 'You'd be making a great mistake not to take this.'

'If we had any more children,' said Mr. Haddock to Mrs. Haddock, 'we could build.'

'Exactly,' said the steward. 'Every man ought to own his own home.'

'How about transportation?' asked Mr. Haddock shrewdly.

The steward shrugged his shoulders. 'The very best,' he replied.

'What do you think, dear?' asked Mr. Haddock.

'Well,' said Mrs. Haddock, 'we could move that bunk over there—and put that washstand under the window.'

'I'm sorry,' said the steward, 'but that washstand can't be moved.'

'What direction is that?' asked Mrs. Haddock, pointing out of the port hole.

'South,' replied the steward.

'Hmmm—sun in the afternoon,' said Mrs. Haddock.

'I'll guarantee it,' said the steward, 'except under unfavorable weather conditions.'

'Such as, for instance, clouds,' said Mr. Haddock.

'How about mosquitoes?' asked Mrs. Haddock.

'You can look at me,' said the steward, starting to remove his white coat. 'I haven't been bitten all year.'

'Well!' said Mrs. Haddock, 'we might try it, Will. After all, it *is* near the sea.'

'The best thing in the world,' said the steward to Mr. Haddock, 'for hay fever.'

'But I haven't got hay fever,' said Mr. Haddock.

'Are you sure?' asked the steward, and Mr. Haddock felt very uncomfortable.

'How do you like it, Mildred?' said Mrs. Haddock.

'I'm sure the little girl will like it,' said the steward quickly, giving Mildred a nice smile. 'All children do.'

'Oh, they do, do they?' said Mildred.

'Yes, they do, do they,' said the steward, and he added, 'What a disagreeable child!'

'Isn't she,' agreed Mr. Haddock. 'And we have tried so hard, too.'

Just then a loud blast of a whistle sounded from above.

'Oh, dear!' said Mrs. Haddock, 'we're near a factory. That means a lot of smoke and soot, Will.'

'Not at all, madam,' said the steward, 'that's just the boat signaling. We'll be leaving in ten minutes now.'

'Let's go upstairs,' said Mr. Haddock, 'and see us leave. And, steward, just put those bags under the bunk.'

'Yes, sir,' said the steward, and as they were leaving he aimed a sly kick at Mildred but missed.

Upstairs, on the main deck, all was bustle and confusion.

'Everybody off!' yelled a tall man in a blue uniform, blowing a shrill whistle. 'Everybody off!'

'That doesn't mean us,' said Mr. Haddock, clutching his wife's arm. 'I'm sure it doesn't, dear.'

So they stayed on, and after a while people began running down gangplanks blowing whistles, and running up gangplanks, with baskets of fruit and flowers, and on the shore people began waving handkerchiefs and American flags, and calling 'Good-bye,' and on the boat people began throwing kisses and flowers, and Ganna Walska began to be photographed for the Sunday supplements, and tugs began whistling in the river, and an airplane flew past overhead and the man next to Mr. Haddock began trying to tell somebody on shore that he had forgot to telephone Mrs. McDonald about the something fixtures, and the man on shore wasn't getting it very well, and 'I guess we're off,' said Mr. Haddock, and it was so exciting that his voice broke a little and Mrs. Haddock began to cry.

And half an hour later he looked at his watch and said, 'I wonder why we don't start.'

And an hour later the people on the dock began to feel a little foolish, and the people on the boat began to feel a little irritated, and some of them went below to their staterooms, and some of the people on the dock went home, and then finally the ship's whistle blew another big long blast, and they let down the gangplank, and on walked Mayor Hylan's son-in-law, and they started.

'Well, I guess we're off,' said Mr. Haddock with just the shadow of a doubt in his voice, but as the boat swung around into the river and moved down past the Woolworth building and the Battery, his doubts gradually became a little dissipated.

'There's the Statue of Liberty,' whispered Mrs. Haddock, who was really very excited.

'Look, Mildred!' said Mr. Haddock, 'there's the Statue of Liberty.'

'I'm hungry,' said Mildred, and so he knew they were really off for Europe.

When they went down to their stateroom to wash for lunch they were surprised and delighted to find seven baskets and eleven boxes, containing among other things 103 oranges, 67 bunches of hot-house grapes, 241 fresh figs, 119 cured figs, and 141 prunes.

'This one is from Mrs. Gueminder,' said Mrs. Haddock, reading a card.

'I wonder how she knew I was so constipated,' mused Mr. Haddock, but delighted, just the same, with the timely gift.

Mrs. Haddock began folding up the tissue paper and string in order to save them for some occasion in their travels when they might be terribly in need of tissue paper and string, while Mr. Haddock took out a pencil and began figuring on the back of an envelope.

'Dear,' he said at last, 'I may be a fraction of a decimal off, either plus or minus, but in round numbers I figure that if we concentrate all our efforts and cut out theaters and sleep we can just finish the last of this fruit before we get to France.'

'Oh, dear!' said Mrs. Haddock, 'what *will* we do with it all?'

'Eat it!' said Mr. Haddock. 'Now, for the first three days I have allotted to you 165 grapes, 68 figs, 54 prunes, and 49 oranges.'

'But I don't like oranges,' said Mrs. Haddock.

'That doesn't matter,' said Mr. Haddock severely. 'In a crisis like this we must forget our petty individual likes or dislikes and work only for the good of the whole.'

'Our forefathers'—and Mr. Haddock pointed to the large American flag above him—'who wisely forged this country out of the melting pot of European chaos—our forefathers who beat their swords into plough-shares in order that our children might today enjoy the advantages of this beautiful

new free public school—the man whom we meet today to honor and who gave his acres and his name to this beautiful amusement park—would not permit it. No, my friends,’ said Mr. Haddock, and the vast stateroom became strangely hushed and quiet. ‘No, my friends, the monument which we consecrate today may be to some a mere drinking fountain in the center of our beautiful city, where horses may quench their thirst with water from our proud Muscatawney and pass on, with, perhaps, a prayer of gratitude to the brave little lady whose name it bears, but, my friends’—and Mr. Haddock’s voice fell impressively—‘to others, “something more.” There is another thirst, my friends—a higher thirst—a more divine thirst. And in presenting to this convention this afternoon the name of Alexander P. Sturgis I can only say that he combines in one man all those qualities which have so endeared him to rich and poor alike and I point with pride—I point with pride, my friends—to the fact that he stands in a larger sense—in a larger sense——’

Mr. Haddock stopped and wiped his brow nervously.

‘In a larger sense,’ he repeated.

‘Oh, dear!’ whispered Mrs. Haddock to Mildred. ‘That’s just the place where he got stuck this morning.’

‘In a larger sense,’ said Mr. Haddock, and someone tittered audibly. ‘In a larger sense,’ and then to everyone’s intense relief he went on. ‘In a larger sense we cannot consecrate, we cannot dedicate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men living and dead who fought here have done so far beyond our petty power to add or detract. It is for us the living rather to consecrate our lives to the end that the ideals for which they fought shall not be forgotten and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth. My friends, I thank you,’ and he put on his silk hat and sat down beside Mrs. Haddock.

‘You did awfully well, dear,’ she whispered behind her

white gloved hand, but Mr. Haddock was standing up and bowing and waving his hands to friends and suddenly he picked little Mildred up in his arms and let the crowd see her and the cheering grew louder than ever and then he made Mrs. Haddock stand up and the crowd went wild and there was no doubt that if a vote had been taken then he would have been elected by a large plurality over Jones (Dem.) who had, however, made heavy gains upstate, especially among a certain discontented element in the cities and among the farmers in the rural districts where the new tariff hit hardest.

But just then a knock came on the door and a pink, chubby face appeared and said, 'I'm the bath steward—and I'm afraid I'm awfully late.'

'Not at all,' said Mr. Haddock. 'Do come in. You know Mrs. Haddock, of course—and this is Mildred, our youngest.'

'Don't tell me this is Mildred,' said the bath steward, patting the child's head. 'Why, the last time I saw this little girl she was no bigger than a minute. Well, they do grow up, don't they.'

'Don't they,' said Mildred, drawing away from under his hand and quitting the stateroom with an ill-concealed oath.

'I got caught in the traffic,' explained the bath steward, 'and I'm on my way to the Hemingways and I can just stay a minute.'

'Awfully good of you to drop in,' said Mrs. Haddock. 'Won't you have some fruit?'

'Oh, don't bother, please,' said the bath steward, taking a banana.

'It will just take a minute,' said Mrs. Haddock.

'Let her fix you some,' said Mr. Haddock. 'She likes to do it, really.'

'Oh, no, I couldn't think of it,' said the bath steward, putting two oranges in his pocket. 'I've really just finished

lunch. At the Osbornes', you know—and what a lunch. Everybody was there. I'm surprised you weren't asked.'

'The Osbornes don't seem to know us,' said Mrs. Haddock. 'I guess we don't move high enough for them. I met them once when he and Will were on that Booster committee together—you remember, Will, that afternoon at the Elks Club, and I will say that I never saw three such ill-behaved children in my life.'

'Perfectly frightful!' said the bath steward, smiling sympathetically.

'They do say she has a lovely house,' said Mrs. Haddock. 'But I certainly will not be the first to call, would you?'

'No, indeed!' murmured the bath steward.

'And I hear,' went on Mrs. Haddock, beginning to rock the boat back and forth with her chair, 'that he and she have been on the verge of a divorce several times.'

'I could tell you a lot worse than that,' said the bath steward.

'Please sit down,' said Mrs. Haddock; 'I don't think you find that bunk very comfortable. Will, you get up and give him that place and Mildred, you run out again for a while, will you, dear?'

'No, really,' said the bath steward, 'I can't stay. I only dropped in to ask you what hour you wanted to take your bath.'

'Awfully good of you,' murmured Mr. Haddock. 'Please take some more fruit.'

'What hours have you?' asked Mrs. Haddock in a sudden business-like manner.

'Well,' said the bath steward, 'of course, there has been quite a demand for hours this year.'

'Of course,' said Mr. Haddock sympathetically.

'But I saved something very special for you and Mrs.

Haddock—one of our finest hours. Oh, I'm sure you'll be crazy about it.'

'I'm sure we will,' said Mr. Haddock. 'Can we take it with us now?'

'I think we had better see it first,' said Mrs. Haddock, practically.

'Why Hattie,' said Mr. Haddock, 'do you think that's necessary? The gentleman has been so nice as to save it for us.'

'I think we had better see it first,' repeated Mrs. Haddock, with dignity.

'Of course, madam,' said the bath steward, and smiling understandingly at Mr. Haddock, who felt quite a little embarrassed, he bowed his way out of the stateroom in order to get his bath book.

'You're such a fool, Will,' said Mrs. Haddock after he had gone, but before Mr. Haddock had time to reply they were interrupted by the loud blast of a bugle blown just outside their door.

'Come in,' said Mr. Haddock, and he added reassuringly to his wife, 'It's probably only a few soldiers. Don't bother to change your clothes.'

But the bugle blew again and no one entered, so Mr. and Mrs. Haddock began reading the instructions regarding life belts.

'It's a little confusing,' said Mr. Haddock. 'In the first place, that man in the picture has got a mustache——'

'You silly,' said Mrs. Haddock for the second time that day, 'you don't have to have a mustache to wear a life belt properly.'

'Are you sure?' asked Mr. Haddock, but just at that moment little Mildred burst into the cabin.

'That's the bugle for lunch,' she announced, so with a few reassuring prunes and a cheery 'Good luck' all around they

went out into the corridor and down into the main dining saloon where they partook of luncheon in company with three other people who seemed to Mrs. Haddock, as the meal progressed, to be a little strange.

'I think they are a little strange,' she said to Mr. Haddock after lunch, as they were sitting in their stateroom.

'What do you mean?' asked Mr. Haddock.

'Well—that lady with the beard, for instance,' said Mrs. Haddock.

'What's wrong about that?' asked Mr. Haddock, indignantly.

'Well, nothing,' said Mrs. Haddock baffled, 'except that it is sort of funny to see her sitting there with a beard.'

'My dear Harriet,' said Mr. Haddock, 'you must remember that we are, after all, strangers here—practically guests of this boat. And, furthermore, we are from the middle West and have had practically no contact with European life. So please, my dear Harriet,' he said patiently, 'let's try and not be too provincial.'

'All right,' said Mrs. Haddock. 'But I don't see why you have to make a fool of yourself over the first young chippet who comes along with a beard.'

'I wasn't making a fool of myself,' said Mr. Haddock, somewhat exasperated. 'I was just being nice to a young girl who seemed to be traveling alone.'

'Alone!' said Mrs. Haddock. 'I'll bet she's alone! Who were those other two men?'

'I'm sure I don't know,' said Mr. Haddock. 'Probably two international crooks.'

'She spoke to them,' said Mrs. Haddock.

'On a boat like this,' said Mr. Haddock, 'we are just one big family.'

'There never was a bearded lady in our family,' said Mrs. Haddock, 'and you know it.'

'I assure you,' said Mr. Haddock, jesting, 'that my interests were purely tonsorial.'

'Fiddlesticks,' said Mrs. Haddock. 'Have some fruit?'

'No, thank you,' said Mr. Haddock, putting his hands quickly in his pockets. 'I'm not eating fruit. I think I shall go up on deck and walk.'

'I shall lie here,' said Mrs. Haddock, 'and eat fruit.'

'One of you,' said little Mildred, 'is going to be very seasick before long and then I shall know which to do. I wish you would hurry, though, for I feel rather strange.'

'Come with me, Mildred,' said her father, but just then a knock came on the door and the steward appeared with some telegrams and letters.

'Haddock?' he asked.

'Haddock,' replied Mr. Haddock, for it was he.

'How do you spell it?' asked the steward, looking at the telegrams.

'"H" as in "Haddock,"' began Mr. Haddock. '"A" as in "Arthur"——'

'Arthur who?' asked the steward.

'I don't know,' said Mr. Haddock.

'Nothing here for Arthur Haddock,' said the steward.

'But that isn't my name,' said Mr. Haddock.

'What is your name?' asked the steward.

'Haddock,' replied Mr. Haddock, becoming a little exasperated. 'William P. Haddock—and this is my wife——'

'Your wife?' asked the steward.

'My wife—my wife,' screamed Mr. Haddock. 'Wife as in "Wife taking my fun where I found it."'

'Oh,' said the steward. 'Mrs. Haddock.'

'Practically,' said Mr. Haddock, 'and that is my daughter Mildred. I'm sorry I lost my temper.'

'I guess there's nothing for you,' said the steward. 'No—nothing for Mildred Haddock. Sorry.'

'Well, is there anything for me?' asked Mr. Haddock.

'I'll look,' said the steward, and he looked.

'Is that you?' he said, and handed Mr. Haddock a telegram.

'Yes,' said Mr. Haddock.

'That's all,' said the steward, and he left, only to reappear almost immediately.

'Say, do you know a Mr.—a Mr.,' and he looked at the letter, 'a Mr. Blumenstein—Mr. Sol Blumenstein—I think that's it.'

'No,' replied Mr. Haddock. 'Sorry.'

'Do you?' the steward then asked Mrs. Haddock.

'No, I do not,' she replied.

'Maybe you do?' he said, turning to Mildred.

'No,' replied Mildred with a sneer. 'I have not had the pleasure of Mr. Blumenstein's acquaintance.'

'He's a peach of a fellow,' said the steward. 'Well, good day.'

'Good day,' they called, cheerfully, and Mr. Haddock opened the telegram.

'It's from Frank and Edith,' he said.

'What does it say?' asked Mrs. Haddock excitedly.

'Bon voyage,' replied Mr. Haddock.

'That means "a good voyage" in French,' said Mildred.

'How I envy you your knowledge of the language,' said her father, but just then another knock came on the door and a passenger appeared.

'Mr. Haddock?' he asked.

'I think so,' said Mr. Haddock.

'Here are some letters and telegrams for you,' the stranger said. 'The steward just left them in my cabin. I opened them by mistake.'

'Anything interesting?' asked Mr. Haddock.

'No,' said the stranger. 'Not much. They all send much love and say "have a good time." Your Uncle George's teeth are worse—but then,' and he smiled, 'you know how Uncle George is.'

'I'm surprised he's hung on this long,' said Mr. Haddock.

'Why doesn't he go to a good dentist?' asked the stranger.

'You've got me there,' said Mr. Haddock. 'He's a bit "near," you know.'

'Anything else?' asked Mrs. Haddock. 'How were the twins?'

'Bully,' said the stranger. 'And oh yes—Alice Kent is going to have a baby in September.'

'You don't say so,' exclaimed Mr. Haddock. 'Well, well. What do you think of that, Hattie?'

'We'll be back by September,' said Mrs. Haddock. 'Won't we now, Will?'

'Oh sure,' replied her husband. 'Anything else?'

'Well,' said the stranger, 'your Aunt Flora got into trouble with the gas company again the day you left and they've threatened to sue her—but I think it will be all right.'

'Oh sure,' said Mr. Haddock. 'Don't you worry yourself about that. Well, it's mighty nice of you to bring these letters to us.'

'Not at all,' said the stranger. 'Maybe you can do the same for me sometime.'

'I'd be glad to,' said Mr. Haddock, and they shook hands and the stranger left.

'Here's a telegram he didn't open,' said Mrs. Haddock. 'It's from Mame.'

'What does she say?' asked Mr. Haddock.

'"Bon voyage,"' replied Mrs. Haddock.

'That means "a good voyage" in French,' said Mr. Haddock, chucking his daughter under the chin. 'Come on, Mildred—let's go on deck.'

On deck they found a number of people seated in steamer chairs.

'I wonder how one goes about getting a steamer chair,' said Mr. Haddock half to himself, half aloud, and there was a flash of smoke, a smell of sulphur, and a gentleman appeared, on whose face was a curiously sinister smile.

'I am the deck steward,' he said.

'Oh yes,' said Mr. Haddock, a little nervously. 'I want three chairs, about the center——'

The deck steward's smile became somewhat patronizing.

'The center has been sold out for the next eight weeks,' he said wearily.

'Well—the side then,' said Mr. Haddock.

Just then a rather stout woman pushed her way between Mr. Haddock and the deck steward and demanded, 'Have you got something for Smithers?'

'But madam,' protested Mr. Haddock, and she turned and glared at him.

'What name?' asked the deck steward.

'Smithers—Mrs. Pearl Smithers,' she replied.

The deck steward consulted his book.

'Nothing here for Smithers,' he said.

'Are you sure?' she demanded.

'Nothing for Smithers,' said the deck steward. 'Next.'

'I want three chairs——' began Mr. Haddock.

'But Mr. Henderson said they would be left here in my name,' continued Mrs. Smithers.

'Nothing for Smithers, madam,' said the deck steward.

'That's very funny,' said Mrs. Smithers.

'Next,' said the deck steward.

'I'm sure Mr. Henderson wouldn't have made a mistake,' said the lady, turning to Mr. Haddock.

'I'm sure he wouldn't,' agreed Mr. Haddock.

'Next,' called the deck steward.

'Look under Talcott, then,' said the woman. 'H. A. Talcott.'

'Nothing under Talcott, madam,' said the deck steward.

'Firestone?' she suggested. 'Mr. or Mrs. Firestone?'

'Nothing under Firestone,' said the deck steward. 'Please, madam—*next!*'

'I would like three chairs——' began Mr. Haddock automatically, but curiously enough he now found that he was third in line, two very large women having in some way gotten in ahead of him.

'What have you got in medium priced chairs?' asked the first lady.

'What night?' asked the deck steward.

The lady turned to the lady behind her.

'What night, Alice?' she asked.

'I don't know,' said Alice. 'How would Wednesday do?'

'Wednesday?' said the lady. 'No—Wednesday the Free-mans are coming to dinner.'

'Please, madam,' said the deck steward, 'what night?'

'Thursday I can't get off,' said Alice, 'how about Tuesday?'

'All right,' said the lady. 'Tuesday,' and she turned to the deck steward, 'What have you got in medium priced chairs for Tuesday?'

'How many, madam?' he asked.

She turned to Alice.

'How many, Alice?' she asked.

'I don't know,' said Alice. 'Do you think Frank can come?'

'Oh, I wouldn't ask Frank,' said the lady.

'Who would you ask?' asked Alice. 'George?'

'How many, how many, how many?' said the deck steward.

By this time a rather long line had formed behind Mr. Haddock, and signs of no small impatience were beginning to be manifested by the crowd.

'Well,' said the lady, 'we could get four and then if George couldn't come we could ask Frank.'

'Or we could turn in the seat,' suggested Alice.

'Can you turn in seats you don't use?' asked the lady of the deck steward.

'No, madam,' he replied.

'Why not?' she asked.

'It's a rule of the management,' said the deck steward. 'How many seats do you want?'

'Well—four then,' she replied.

'Four for Tuesday,' he said. 'Four on the side—second row.'

'How much?' she asked.

'Two twenty apiece with tax,' he replied.

'How much?' she asked.

'Two twenty apiece,' he repeated. 'Please hurry, madam.'

The lady turned to Alice.

'They're two twenty apiece,' she said. 'What do you think?'

Alice shook her head.

'Haven't you anything cheaper?' the lady asked.

'Not for Tuesday night,' he replied.

Alice nudged her friend. 'Ask about matinées,' she said

'When are matinées?' she asked.

'All sold out,' he said.

'What?' asked the lady.

'All sold out,' he repeated.

'Matinées? No more seats?' she asked.

'Matinées,' he said, 'all sold out.'

'Oh shoot,' said the lady. 'What will we do, Alice?'

'I don't know,' said Alice.

By this time the line behind Mr. Haddock and the two ladies had extended half way around the boat and out into the street and included men and women from all walks of life, for it did not seem that Alice and her friend were ever going to be able to decide what to do.

'It looks like rain,' said Mr. Haddock, stroking his long white beard and speaking not as one of them but as a prophet.

And it grew dark and in the distance could be heard rumblings of distant thunder.

'If there is a god,' said Mr. Haddock, who had been reading H. G. Wells only that morning, 'and I strongly suspect that there is one—He will give us a sign.'

And it grew darker and darker, and over the sea advanced the pattering rain, and storm clouds gathered over the plunging ship, and the wind whistled through the rigging, and then suddenly there was a terrific flash of lightning and a deafening peal of thunder, and then, out on the water, floated a large white object, too large to be a swan.

'A whale!' cried Mr. Haddock, joyously.

'A miracle!' they all cried. 'A miracle.'

So they took Alice and her friend and threw them into the ocean, and the whale swallowed them, and a choir of 300 mixed voices from the South-Bethlehem Tonkunst and Liederkranz Society burst into the final chorus, 'Gott ist ewig,' and the whale was slowly lifted out of the ocean and gradually but jerkily ascended into heaven with a slight creaking of ropes, and the afternoon was over.

'How did you like it?' asked Mr. Haddock of an elderly gentleman as they slowly filed out.

The old gentleman shook his head sadly. 'There aren't any good whales any more,' he said. 'Did you ever go to Bayreuth?'

'No,' replied Mr. Haddock.

'Ah me,' sighed the old gentleman. 'There were whales in those days.'

'I bet there were,' said Mr. Haddock, who, under the broadening influence of this trip, was gradually becoming quite a bit of a philosopher. 'I bet there were.'

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territory
that

SHORT CUTS TO SUCCESS

Joseph Fulling Fishman

FIRST: *Rules concerning the care and feeding of customers.*
There are four main ones, as follows:

- (a) Always greet your customer with a smile
- (b) Never turn your back on a customer
- (c) The customer is always right
- (d) God bless the customer

and thousands of minor rules showing how to heat customers' toddy, when to wean them from the bottle, how to rub them with banana oil when chafed, how to feed them apple-sauce when peevish, when boloney may be given without causing indigestion, how to soothe them when they feel that something is sticking them, and so on.

Many young men struggling up the ladder to Success in the mail-order business have found it difficult to greet *their* customers with a smile. The nearest they can come to it is to use open-face envelopes. The trouble with these is that one loses control of the smile the minute the envelope is dropped into the box. If the envelope is opened by the office boy or some other junior executive the smile is wasted. This of course adds to the overhead and increases the cost per inquiry. In the direct-to-the-trade smile, on the other hand, waste can be avoided by keeping the smile in stock until ready for use and switching it off when anyone approaches for whom it is not intended. Also, the effect of the smile can be watched. If its

And it grable a follow-up smile can be useuld be hovor-rumblin follow-up can be saved for a more like . . . ct.

'If not under any circumstance permit youd been mer-greeting smile to become fixed. 'A fixed smile ngly sia lost sale,' says Ezra Keyhole in a recent article in the 'Single Sock Standard,' the leading trade organ of the one-legged sock industry. So let your smile wander; just off the right ear one day, between the Adam's apple and the lower lip the next, under the left temple the third, and so on. But no matter where it is, be sure your customer sees it, unless it is on your back. In that case, as you should never turn your back on a customer, you are simply out of luck and might as well spend the rest of the day swelling your expense account.

The ingredients of your customer-greeting smile should be of the best; you will find it pays in the end. Only clean teeth, elastic eyebrows, and puckers from contented faces should be used. You cannot be too careful of the latter, as old or shopworn puckers have a tendency to crack when subjected to an unusual strain, as, for instance, when you smile at a customer who discounts his bills. The corners of the mouth should be rounded and free from dust, and all wrinkles neatly seamed and lined.

If, despite all discouragements, you continue to greet customers with a smile, that happy time is bound to come when you yourself will be a customer. It will then be necessary for you to cultivate smile resistance. 'The successful customer returns goods, not smiles,' says Petroleum Z. Gassaway, Cotton Goods Prints Prince, President of the American Concrete Soap Corporation, and largest stockholder of the Gassaway Suspender, Sewer Pipe, and Perfume Co. At first you may have some difficulty in cultivating smile resistance, but after you learn that goods are never up to sample, that shipments are always delayed 'due to causes beyond our control,' and that your complaints of shortage 'have been referred to the

proper department,' your smile resistance will gradually improve, until finally all the salesmen working your territory will refer to you as a horse-faced old something or other that sounds like ditch, hitch, niche, pitch, rich, stitch, or witch.¹ When that time does arrive you may feel sure that you are well on the road to Success. 'I would rather be a horse-faced old something or other that sounds like ditch, hitch, niche, pitch, rich, stitch, or witch than President of the United States,' says Querulous Q. Quackenbush, millionaire bridge merchant, who peddled bridges from door to door for years until he saved up enough money to buy a few mouth organs and start in business for himself.

Thousands of illustrations could be given to show that **this** rule is the foundation of Success. One will suffice:

All my Success I owe to my smile [says William Wiggins, the Shoe King, affectionately known to the trade as Wiggle-jaw Wiggins]. I began life as a clerk in a shoe store. One day a heavy-set man came into the store and hit his chin on one of the small trying-on stools. I could see he was a customer, so I greeted him with a smile, whereupon he snarled, 'What're you grinning at, you damned jackass?' at the same time giving me a vicious blow which broke my jaw.

It turned out that he was very wealthy. He paid my doctor's bill and gave me \$5,000 if I would agree not to sue him. I took the money and started a shoe store. Today I own a chain of twenty-four and am considered one of the richest men in the city. So I say again: Always greet your customers with a smile.

Second: Always do more than is expected of you. If you are a salesman, stenographer, or bookkeeper you should wash the windows or relieve a truckman for lunch or help the fireman in the boiler room. Of course, if you can follow Rules 1 and 2 simultaneously and greet your customers with a smile at the

¹Also itch, flitch, and switch.

same time you are shoveling coal into the furnace, your progress will be that much more rapid. This can sometimes be accomplished by taking the customer down into the cellar or bringing the furnace up to the office. If the customer is good-natured he can often be induced to meet the furnace halfway—say, for instance, on the first floor, or even on the bookkeepers' balcony. While shoveling and smiling, however, you should be careful not to turn your back on the customer. By facing the customer and throwing the coal over your shoulder all three rules can be observed at the same time and your progress along the road to Success be made correspondingly greater.

Had it not been for the fact that I have always done more than was expected of me I would still be a messenger instead of a partner in one of New York's largest stockbrokerage houses [says P. G. Esterhazy, who is known as Pig to his intimates].

One of my duties was to carry buying and selling orders from one of our most successful clients to other brokerage houses to be quietly executed in order not to excite the market. I invariably made it a point to stop in at the office of another broker on the way, so that he could steam the letters open, get the information they contained, and act accordingly in the market. My commission for this service during the first year amounted to \$5,000.00. In five years I saved enough to buy myself an interest in another brokerage house.

In response to requests for a word of advice to young men anxious to climb the ladder of Success high enough to get in on the ground floor, I should say: Always roll a small pencil under the flap instead of steaming your employer's letters open as I did. I have found out since that rolling is just as effective and less easy to detect.

Third: Never watch the clock. Many ambitious youths have worked for years under the impression that they were

not clock watchers, wondering why they still remained failures, only to find out at last that the office didn't have a clock. They didn't realize until too late that, in order not to be a clock watcher, there must be a clock not to watch. Indeed, we would suggest that you work in a place where they have a couple of these timepieces, so that you can not only follow this rule and not watch the clock, but can at the same time do more than is expected of you and not watch two clocks. Ignoring a clock is sufficient. It is not necessary to be nasty to it or to treat it insultingly, as nothing is ever gained by such boorish tactics. You will find that acting like a gentleman even in the office pays in the long run, so a good rule to follow is to treat a clock as you would a salesman—simply pretend that it doesn't exist.

Quite naturally you will ask: How am I to avoid the danger of working overtime if I do not watch the clock? If you are a trained woodsman you will notice many signs which will warn you that it is getting near quitting time. Carefully observe the stenographers and other bright-plumaged life about you. By a curious instinct which has always baffled naturalists, these pretty creatures will, at the same instant, suddenly cease the constant pecking by which they live. It will then be just twenty-five minutes before quitting time. This interval they use in busily preening their feathers, arching their necks, and generally making themselves pretty for their mates. Then suddenly with nothing but that same marvelous instinct to guide them, they will all take a last pat at their topknot with their claw and, with shrill cries, begin to hop rapidly away. This should be your warning. Run (don't walk) to the nearest exit and you will be out of the office on the very dot of quitting time.

All my Success I owe to the fact that I never watched the clock [says Paprika Kikapanpolous, the Yankee cut-class Shoe Lace King]. I always watched a pretty little stenographer in

the office. When she began to put the carbon paper back in the drawer I knew it was getting near quitting time, so would myself prepare to leave. One day she observed me watching her and smiled. I smiled back and we walked home together and became friends.

She told me she was the daughter of a very wealthy man, but had had a quarrel with him and wanted to show him she was capable of making her own living. I thereupon married her, effected a reconciliation, and am now junior partner in her father's business at \$50,000 a year and the privilege of counting the day's receipts.

So I say: Never watch the clock. A stenographer is easier to look at and is just as reliable around quitting time.

Fourth: Always pick your employer. Thousands of illustrations could be given showing the great Success almost invariably achieved by those who followed this rule. The story of Maidis Marco, the great chemist who made a huge fortune analyzing bootleg chop suey for timid eaters, and who is known as the Duke of Mixture wherever chop suey is fabricated, is typical. Says Professor Marco:

To achieve Success it is essential to pick one's employer. The first job a young man obtains often shapes his entire career, and he cannot be too careful in seeing that he is properly placed.

Although I have been working for forty years I have only had one employer. I received many offers of more money from his competitors, but a careful investigation always convinced me they were not the right kind of bosses for a man of my temperament. And I have never had occasion to regret my decision, as I was able to start in business for myself after I had remained in my one position for ten years.

So I say again: Always pick your employer. All my Success is due to the fact that I picked mine, picked him clean, and refused offers from others I knew I couldn't pick.

THE HEN

Will Cuppy

THE HEN or female Chicken is an essential part of chicken farming, one of the major psychoses.¹ The Hen has no business sense. She lays very poorly when eggs are expensive. At other times you can't stop her. Hens cluck a lot. The Hen says: 'Tuk tuk tuk tuk twork.' The more disillusioned Hens say merely: 'Twork.' When a Hen says nothing but 'Twork'² she has seen her best days. Hens have no teeth and are easily hypnotized. Some Hens are more attractive than others. The Plymouth Rock is a good all-around Hen. She is willing to lay or sit or be fried, because it is all the same to her. But her many virtues pall in time. She becomes more and more Hen-like. Old Plymouth Rocks should be boiled. If you have been around Plymouth Rocks, almost any other Hen seems wonderful. The White Leghorn is perfectly grand³ and Rhode Island Reds are all right for a change. The Hen is very patient. She does not seem to mind. The Hen exhibits a touching devotion to her home. She has been known to starve rather than abandon a nestful of doorknobs. She cares for her Chicks all day long, providing them with food and bad advice and fre-

¹A net profit of \$186,298.00 has been realized in this business on an initial outlay of \$5.77, including \$0.50 for the Hen, \$0.27 for the eggs and \$5.00 for the cocaine.

²*Twork* is capable of an almost infinite number of inflections and meanings. It probably covers the whole ground.

³The White Leghorn is a Mediterranean or non-sitting variety. She is a bad mother, but she is so pretty that it doesn't matter. *Sitting* is not the whole of life by any means.

quently trampling them flat. The Chick's aim in life is to wander into the shrubbery and get lost and fall into a pan of water. This is called instinct. Many Chicks are born in incubators. They spend their formative period in parcel-post containers.⁴

LIFE IS A BOWL OF EUGENE O'NEILLS

Frank Sullivan

MY NEXT dramatic work will be a sextilogy, so called because it will consist of six plays all filled with sex. The acting of it will require fifteen hours. There will be twenty-four different kinds of sex in it, an all-time record. Of these, seven are completely new and have never before appeared in any dramatic work not written by Earl Carroll. Of the seven, six were discovered last spring (in the love season) by the Sullivan-National Geographic Society Joint Sex Expedition to the summit of Havelock Ellis. The seventh is a new rustproof, non-collapsible kind of sex, invented by myself after years of research during my odd moments; moments which grew odder and odder as my investigations progressed. This new variety of sex is made from goldenrod and I call it Tooralooraluminum.

The sextilogy will concern the goings-on of a family named Baddun. The family consists of a Confederate veteran, General Baddun, who is hated by his wife, Alla Baddun, who in turn is loved by their son, Earle Baddun, and hated by their

⁴The effect upon their general outlook may be imagined. Incubator Chicks eagerly snatch and swallow red worsted Worms fed to them by professors of biology. This proves several things about all concerned.

daughter, Alice Baddun, who is in love with her father and her brother.

As the sextilogy opens the Badduns are discovered having a snack of breakfast consisting of creamed henbane, toadstools *sous-cloche*, and Paris-green pudding with strychnine sauce. A percolator of prussic acid bubbles cozily on the range. The favors are special suicide revolvers which, by simply pulling the trigger, can also be used for murdering one's next of kin.

The Badduns sit there glowering at each other. Earle is staring at Alice. Alice shudders, and buries her face in a remote part of her hands, where she thinks Earle will never find it.

EARLE—Nice weather we're having.

ALICE [*sternly*]—Earle!

EARLE—What?

ALICE—Why do you say that? You know it's not nice weather we're having. It may be nice weather for others, but it can never be nice weather for us Badduns. Why do you look at me like that, Earle, with desire in your elms? For God's sake, stop looking at me like that, Earle! Don't touch me, Earle.

EARLE—All right, I won't—if you incest.

ALLA—Life is just a bowl of cherries.

EARLE—Mother, may I be excused from table?

ALLA—Why, my son?

EARLE—I want to shoot myself. I'll only be gone a minute.

ALLA—But why do you want to shoot yourself, my boy?

EARLE—It's all so horrible, Mother.

ALLA—What's horrible, dear?

EARLE—Life, Mother, Life. When I was in the army, every mother I shot seemed to look like every other mother I shot, and every other mother looked like you, Mother. And then every other mother began to look like me, Mother, and I felt

that every time I killed somebody's mother I was committing suicide and every time I committed suicide I felt I looked like every other Eugene O'Neill.

ALLA—Life is just a bowl of Eugene O'Neills.

EARLE—Oh, never leave me, Mother. You and I will go away together, away from all this, far away. I know an island in the Pacific—

GENERAL BADDUN [*eagerly*—Say, is it a little short island about seventeen miles in circumference, with palm trees all over it?

EARLE—Yes, and a cliff at the southern extremity.

GENERAL—That's the one! I know that island.

EARLE—You *do*?

GENERAL—I'll say I do! Boy, if it could talk, the stories that island could tell about me!

EARLE—It's certainly a small world.

ALICE [*shuddering*—It's a horrible world. . . . Mother!

ALLA—What?

ALICE—Stop looking at Father like that. Father!

GENERAL—What?

ALICE—Stop looking at Mother like that. Earle!

EARLE—What?

ALICE—Stop looking at me like that. Alice!

ALICE—What?

ALICE—Stop looking at Father like that. And, Dr. Joseph Collins, you stop looking at Love and Life like that.

ALLA—Life is a bowl of Dr. Joseph Collinses.

GENERAL—May I have another cup of prussic acid, Alla? Two lumps, please. . . . Thanks. My, I always say there's nothing like a cup of good, strong, black prussic acid to wake you up in the morning and clear the brain of cobwebs. Alla, are you still unfaithful to me with that ship captain?

ALLA—Which one, dear?

GENERAL—You know—the one that's my step-cousin of something.

ALLA—I thi-ink so, but I'm not sure. You know my memory. What's his name?

GENERAL—Brump. Captain Adam Brump.

[*Alla takes an address book from her crinoline and consults it.*]

ALLA—Let me see-ee—Bradge, Braim, Brattigan, Brellk, Briffel, Broskowitz—yes, here he is. Brump, Captain Adam Brump. But why do you ask about him, dear? Anything wrong with him?

GENERAL—No, no! Fine fellow. Go right ahead. Have a good time. You're only young once.

ALICE [*gloomily*—It's not so. We Badduns are always Jung.

ALLA—Life gets Adler and Adler.

EARLE—Oh, Mother dear, I'm afreud, I'm so afreud. Let us go to my island in the Pacific.

[*Alice shudders.*]

ALLA—General, I wish you'd speak to Alice about this constant shuddering. She'll have the plaster shuddered off half the rooms in the house if she doesn't quit.

[*Enter Norn, a maid.*]

NORN—The coffin man is here, sir.

GENERAL—Tell him we don't want any today.

EARLE—Oh, we don't, don't we!

[*Earle draws a revolver and shoots his father.*]

NORN [*shouting downstairs to the coffin man*—One on the coffin, Joe.

[*From below, like an echo of the voice of the tragic and relentless Fate that pursues the Badduns, floats the answering voice of the coffin man: 'O. K.'*]

EARLE—I'm not sorry I shot Father. He looked like a Philadelphia postman.

ALLA—Life is a Philadelphia postman—slow, gray, inexorable.

ALICE—Life is a bag of mail. And death—death is a cancelled stamp.

EARLE.—Birth is a special delivery.

ALICE.—Better we Badduns had never been born. Here, Earle. Here is a cigar.

EARLE.—Why do you give me a cigar, Alice?

ALICE.—For scoring a bull's-eye on Father, Earle. Does anybody else wish to take a chance? Step right up, folks . . .

EARLE.—Cigars. When I was in the army every cigar I smoked looked like every other cigar. Every time I smoked a cigar I felt I was committing suicide.

ALICE.—I shall go mad.

ALLA.—You will go mad.

EARLE.—She will go mad.

AUDIENCE.—We shall go mad.

EARLE.—You will go mad.

EUGENE O'NEILL.—They will go mad.

EARLE [*turning quickly to O'Neill*].—Are you Eugene O'Neill, the playwright?

GENE.—To put it mildly, Son.

ALLA.—Give him the works, Earle.

ALICE.—Yes, give it to him, Earle. See how *he* likes being bumped off.

EARLE.—Mr. O'Neill, on behalf of those members of the casts of your recent plays who have not died like flies from overwork, it gives me great pleasure to plug you with this thirty-eight calibre—

GENE.—But—

ALLA.—What is Life, Gene, but one great big But?

[*Earle shoots Gene.*]

ALICE.—Now, come on. Let's boil this thing down to three acts.

ALLA.—One act, or I won't commit suicide.

ALICE.—All right, one it is. Get up, Father. Snap out of that coffin.

MR. DOOLEY ON THE GAME OF FOOTBALL

Finley Peter Dunne

'WHIN I was a young man,' said Mr. Dooley, 'an' that was a long time ago—but not so long ago as manny iv me inimies'd like to believe, if I had anny inimies—I played fut-ball, but 'twas not th' fut-ball I see whin th' Brothers' school an' th' Saint Aloysius Tigers played las' week on th' pee-raries.

'Whin I was a la-ad, iv a Sundah afthernoon we'd get out in th' field where th' oats'd been cut away, an' we'd choose up sides. Wan cap'n'd pick one man, an' th' other another. "I choose Dooley," "I choose O'Connor," "I choose Dimpsey," "I choose Riordan," an' so on till there was twinty-five or thirty on a side. Thin wan cap'n'd kick th' ball, an' all our side'd r-run at it an' kick it back; an' thin wan iv th' other side'd kick it to us, an' after awhile th' game'd get so tim-pischous that all th' la-ads iv both sides'd be in wan pile, kickin' away at wan or th' other or at th' ball or at th' impire, who was mos'ly a la-ad that cudden't play an' that come out less able to play thin he was whin he wint in. An', if anny wan laid hands on th' ball, he was kicked be ivry wan else an' be th' impire. We played fr'm noon till dark, an' kicked th' ball all th' way home in the moonlight.

'That was fut-ball, an' I was a great wan to play it. I'd think nawthin' iv histin' th' ball two hundherd feet in th' air, an' wanst I give it such a boost that I stove in th' ribs iv th' Prow-testant minister—bad luck to him, he was a kind man—that was lookin' on fr'm a hedge. I was th' finest player in th' whole country, I was so.

'But this here game that I've been seein' ivry time th' pagan fistival iv 'Thanksgivin' comes ar-round, sure it ain't th' game I played. I seen th' Dorgan la-ad comin' up th' sthreet yesterdah in his fut-ball clothes—a pair iv matthresses on his legs, a pillow behind, a mask over his nose, an' a bushel measure iv hair on his head. He was followed be three men with bottles, Dr. Ryan, an' th' Dorgan fam'ly. I jined them. They was a big crowd on th' pee-rary—a bigger crowd than ye cud get to go f're to see a prize fight. Both sides had their frinds that give th' colledge cries. Says wan crowd: "Take an ax, an ax, an ax to thim. Hooroo, hooroo, hellabaloo. Christyan Brothers!" an' th' other says, "Hit thim, saw thim, gnaw thim, chaw thim, Saint Alo-ysius!" Well, afther awhile they got down to wur-ruk. "Sivin, eighteen, two, four," says a la-ad. I've seen people go mad over figures durin' th' free silver campaign, but I niver see figures make a man want f'r to go out an' kill his fellow-men befure. But these here figures had th' same effect on th' la-ads that a mintion iv Lord Castle-reagh'd have on their fathers. Wan la-ad hauled off, an' give a la-ad acrost fr'm him a punch in th' stomach. His frind acrost th' way caught him in th' ear. Th' cinter rush iv th' Saint Aloysiuses took a runnin' jump at th' left lung iv wan iv th' Christyan Brothers, an' wint to th' grass with him. Four Christyan Brothers leaped most crooly at four Saint Aloysiuses, an' rolled thim. Th' cap'n iv th' Saint Aloysiuses he took th' cap'n iv th' Christyan Brothers be th' leg, an' he pounded th' pile with him as I've seen a section hand tamp th' thrack. All this time young Dorgan was standin' back, takin' no hand in th' affray. All iv a suddent he give a cry iv rage, an' jumped feet foremost into th' pile. "Down!" says th' impire. "Faith, they are all iv that," says I. "Will iver they get up?" "They will," says ol' man Dorgan. "Ye can't stop thim," says he.

'It took some time f'r to pry thim off. Near ivry man iv th'

Saint Aloysiuses was tied in a knot around wan iv th' Christyan Brothers. On'y wan iv them remained on th' field. He was lyin' face down, with his nose in th' mud. "He's kilt," says I. "I think he is," says Dorgan, with a merry smile. "'Twas my boy Jimmy done it, too," says he. "He'll be arrested f'r murder," says I. "He will not," says he. "There's on'y wan polis-man in town cud take him, an' he's down town doin' th' same f'r somebody," he says. Well, they carried th' corpse to th' side, an' took th' ball out iv his stomach with a monkey wrinch, an' th' game was rayshumed. "Sivin, sixteen, eight eleven," says Saint Aloysius; an' young Dorgan started to run down th' field. They was another young la-ad r-runnin' in fr-front iv Dorgan; an' as fast as wan iv th' Christyan Brothers come up an' got in th' way, this here young Saint Aloysius grabbed him be th' hair iv th' head an' th' sole iv th' fut, an' thrun him over his shoulder. "What's that la-ad doin'?" says I. "Interferin'," says he. "I shud think he was," says I, "an' most impudent," I says. "'Tis such interference as this," I says, "that breaks up fam'lies"; an' I come away.

"'Tis a noble sport, an' I'm glad to see us Irish ar-re gettin' into it. Whin we larn it thruly, we'll teach thim colledge joods fr'm th' pie belt a thrick or two.'

'We have already,' said Mr. Hennessy. 'They'se a team up in Wisconsin with a la-ad be th' name iv Jeremiah Riordan f'r cap'n an' wan named Patsy O'Dea behind him. They come down here, an' bate th' la-ads fr'm th' Chicawgo Colledge down be th' Midway.'

'Iv coorse, they did,' said Mr. Dooley. 'Iv coorse, they did. An' they cud bate anny collection iv Baptists that iver come out iv a tank.'

THE GUEST¹

Marc Connelly

THE scene is Room 1257 in the North American Hotel. Mr. Kenneth Mercer is sitting on the edge of his bed, in his night-shirt, using the telephone.

MR. MERCER—Hello, Aussel, Aussel, Coyne, and Mehoff? . . . Mr. Watson, please. . . . No, ma'am, I haven't an appointment. I *did* have one at nine-thirty but they didn't waken me at the hotel. . . . Yes, ma'am, I know it's ten o'clock. . . . But I've been traveling three days just to see him before he left for Europe. Will you connect me with him? (*While he waits for Mr. Watson, Mr. Mercer reads the card under the glass top of his bed-table. It tells all about the Service Plus which one receives in North American Hotels. It seems the North American Chain has gone the limit in making every patron feel he is 'not merely a guest but a friend.' Mr. Mercer finally gets tired reading, and jiggles the hook of the telephone.*) Hello. . . . Is this Aussel, Aussel, Coyne, and Mehoff? . . . Oh, the hotel operator. . . . No, ma'am, I wasn't through. . . . Will you please get them back for me? . . . Barker 2348. . . . And in the meantime I'd like to have a little breakfast. . . . Which button? . . . All right. Get that number, please.

(*Mr. Mercer goes to an idiotic instrument near the door. It*

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has a mouthpiece and several buttons. Beside it is a neat card reading:

MEALDICATOR

Just another example of North American Hotels, Inc., Service Plus. Merely press the button and state what you wish from our kitchens. 'Waiting for the waiter' never bothers a North American Hotel guest.

Mr. Mercer faces the mouthpiece and pushes the button. Nothing happens.)

MR. MERCER—A cup of coffee, please. (*Nobody seems to care.*) A cup of coffee, please. (*Mr. Mercer waits a moment, hopes somebody heard him, and looks around the room for the suit of clothes which he'd ordered to be pressed and delivered at eight-thirty sharp this morning. He goes to the telephone again.*) Hello, operator. . . . What? . . . (*Excitedly*) Aussel, Aussel, Coyne, and Mehoff? . . . Operator, did you have them back on there? . . . Yes, I *did* want them. . . . Please get them back and . . . Look, operator, last night I gave a bellboy a gray suit I wanted pressed and . . . Which button?

(He goes to a panel near the door with a few more buttons about it and a small sign reading:

THE QUIET VALET

Just another example of North American Service Plus. Merely press the top button and the clothing you wished cleaned or pressed will be returned to you moth-free and fresh in this Byer-Schlaffing All-Cedar Suit Protector.

Mr. Mercer presses the button, the panel swings open and there is somebody's full-dress suit. Mr. Mercer goes to the telephone again.)

MR. MERCER—Look, operator, that isn't my suit. . . . I

cer and begin hammering at the Time Announcer. There is another knock at the door.) Come in. (A head waiter and two other waiters enter with a table set for four. Two busboys follow them bearing a large nickel food-warmer. Mr. Mercer, who has been trying to talk over the telephone from under a pillow, comes up for air and sees them.)

MR. MERCER—Is that the coffee?

HEAD WAITER—Did you want the coffee now, sir? (*This disturbs Mr. Mercer's patience and he speaks sternly into the telephone.*)

MR. MERCER—Operator, I wish to make a complaint! (*The others are aghast.*)

HEAD WAITER—They distinctly said they wanted the coffee afterwards.

MR. MERCER (*to the assemblage*)—Excuse my being in this nightshirt with soap on my face, gentlemen, but I am a little upset. I can't get called in time, I can't get a suit of clothes I ordered, I can't get a cup of coffee, I can't get a telephone call through, and that young man over there brings me dog meat. I've been in hotels all over this country, but . . . (*The air is suddenly charged with electricity. All the others begin to murmur, 'Mr. Pitcairn!' because T. Francis Pitcairn, general Eastern manager of the North American Hotels Chain, has entered the room too.*)

MR. PITCAIRN—What is this about a complaint? (*His manner is very benign.*)

MR. MERCER (*witheringly*)—Oh, nothing, nothing.

MR. PITCAIRN—We are not used to complaints in the North American Chain. We of the Chain pride ourselves and rightly so on the fact that there is no comfort, no luxury which we do not provide in more than full measure to our guests. However, we do not like having our guests take advantage of our good nature. In fact we are resolute in insisting that our hotels be not turned into bedlams. Turn off that radio. (*One of*

the electricians turns it off.) That's better. Now what is our guest's name?

ASSISTANT MANAGER—Kenneth Mercer, Columbus, Ohio.

MR. PITCAIRN—Ah, I have many friends in Columbus.

MR. MERCER—I've only been trying to get a little service.

MR. PITCAIRN—You have been getting plenty of service. Probably more than you have ever enjoyed in your own home. Fortunately, the hotel man of today knows how to protect himself from persons of your stripe, Mr. Mercer, and has taken legal measures to do so. (*There is now a deathlike hush.*)

MR. MERCER—You mean you're going to sue?

MR. PITCAIRN—If our attorneys so advise us. Just pack up his things. He will now leave the hotel. (*Everybody but Mr. Mercer begins to pack his things. The assistant manager offers Mr. Mercer his hat and overcoat.*)

MR. MERCER—But I have a nightgown on.

MR. PITCAIRN—You will notice, gentlemen, he is refusing to go.

MR. MERCER—No, I'm not.

BELLBOY—May I carry your bag, sir?

MR. MERCER—Thank you. I have no change; I'll have to break a bill downstairs.

BELLBOY—That's quite all right, sir. (*Mr. Mercer starts to leave the room.*)

MR. PITCAIRN—By the bye, who are your attorneys?

MR. MERCER—Aussel, Aussel, Coyne, and Mehoff. (*Mr. Mercer stops at the Mealdicator, just as he goes out. He presses a button and steps to the mouthpiece.*) Never mind the coffee.

NOBLESSE OBLIGE

Donald Moffat

THE SUMMER ended, and the time came for the Motts and Poulterers to leave Ste. Amélie and the Villa *Ha! Ça Me Plait!* and return to Paris; and the first step in the hegira was the dragging forth, for purposes of survey, the masses of foreign matter that accumulate in foreign villas (including the Scandinavian) during a prolonged family occupancy. Messieurs Poulter and Mott would have been pleased to throw, or give, almost all of it away; but as their wives had other ideas, the Great Discard ended in nothing whatever but the hurried last-minute purchase of extra boxes to accommodate what the breadwinners spoke of, for want of a more savage expression, as 'offal.' One of the men was to drive the Renault back to town, the other to act as courier, town major, and *maréchal de logis* for the main body. They drew lots. Mr. Mott won, and no father of a family will fail to guess his choice.

The day came. Mr. Mott, in the Renault, piloted the two families to the station, saw the party of fourteen aboard the eight-twelve, and immediately ran, did not walk, to the café across the street and soothed his tumultuous soul with a small beer. Then he drove back to the villa to pack 'all the little things there wasn't room for' into the Renault (like a dear), and start off across country in pursuit. Anyhow, he reflected, they were aboard the train.

He found the trifles in the front hall, looking wistful, like the remnants of a fire sale, and managed to worm his way through them without toppling over a single pile, wondering

what had been thrown away, if this were saved. Nevertheless, he manfully began stowing the collection into the Renault's capacious tonneau, and having filled the tonneau to more than overflowing, he took it all out again and started over, more scientifically—heavy objects at the bottom; then, of course, he did it again, this time with many a savage wedging and prying and muttered oath—as who would not, when the principal items comprised such impossibly shapeless objects as: a folding table, containing six steel chairlets, for *fêtes-champêtres*; two large yachts, Tuileries Cup class, fully rigged; last week's wash, in cardboard; ten bathing suits, wet; two large boxes containing more books than they could hold, without covers; another box, covered, contents unknown, but suspected of containing a few pairs of divers' boots; a folding wooden cot; three straw suitcases, secured with string—'The smart woman,' remembered Mr. Mott, 'travels with *matched* luggage': four hoops; a curious apparatus of slats and rails, imperfectly folded, which Mr. Mott believed to be what is called a 'Kiddy-Koop'; a tin bathtub—'Why?' he asked himself; a hat-box; four tennis racquets in presses; and lastly (he thought), two crockery utensils closely related to the care and feeding of infants. Lastly? But no! For he immediately discovered, lurking bashfully beneath a pile of overcoats, an equally unmentionable piece of nursery furniture which would be described in vivid army style as '1/12th dozen *chaises-percées*, wicker, infant, for use of.' Mr. Mott mentioned the Deity, and thought what to do. He *could* lash it to the top of the load, he reflected; but he ruled against that for fear of its playing the part of an oriflamme, like the white helmet of Navarre, to rally the peasantry when he had to stop en route. He decided to send it by *rapide*, the French equivalent of express.

Mr. Mott was a man of considerable sense of personal dignity. Nevertheless he picked the cursed thing up and started

off toward town, in search of an *emballeur*, or packer, pretending to himself, for encouragement, that it was something else—a hopeless thing to do under the circumstances. To further the illusion he first tried swinging it from one hand, negligently, like a stick, but it was clumsy, and bumped his knees; he didn't quite like to carry it upside down on his head down the villa-bordered main road, as he was accustomed to do at home when moving furniture: it didn't look dignified. 'Dignified!' he snarled aloud, to the alarm of an elderly lady who was passing at the moment. He ended by embracing it with both arms and pressing it tenderly to his bosom, looking as nonchalant as possible, as though he seldom took a walk without one. He whistled a little, but not successfully.

The road was moderately free from pedestrians, and he was comforted by noticing that except for the frightened old lady, and one stout, bearded cyclist who slowed down to make sure Mr. Mott was really carrying what he seemed to be, and then grinned quietly, nobody appeared to pay much attention to him. That was one thing about France: people minded their business, and let you mind yours. He tried to imagine himself carrying a similar piece of furniture through any British equivalent of the polite residential district he was then in, and blanched with horror at the idea. People didn't seem to notice him, but he thought he detected an occasional soberly puzzled look on the faces of the honest black-clad *bourgeoisie* whom he passed, and this he traced to a comprehensible bewilderment on their part as to just why he should go to all that trouble, with so many fields and stone walls about.

And then, suddenly, Mr. Mott saw approaching in the distance none other than the proprietor of the Château Beauroman, Monsieur de Beauroman himself—the one man of all others he would have preferred not to see at the moment.

Not that he disliked M. de Beauroman, or his wife: on the contrary, he admired them both exceedingly, as he admired anything or anyone perfect of its kind. They were, however, all that the phrase *ancien régime* implies—definitely, he thought, in the class of Those Who Would Not Understand.

A few weeks before, Mr. and Mrs. Mott had called at the Château as a result of a solemn promise to a friend at home. It is a well-known fact that a letter of introduction is enough in itself to make any decent person feel like a confidence-man bearing forged documents; but in addition to that sensation—which Mr. Mott duly felt—he had also made what he considered to be a bad break, and he was still sensitive about it. He had made the mistake of attempting an anecdote, in spite of his poor French and the presence of a score or so of French ladies and gentlemen—the Motts had called while a *goûter* was in progress, and there were *limonade*, tea, *porto*, cake, sweet biscuits, vivacious conversation, and slathers of the most exquisite manners—and in the course of the anecdote he had had occasion to use the word ‘stepfather,’ and couldn’t think of its French equivalent. ‘What is the name, Monsieur,’ he finally asked Monsieur de Beauroman, in French, ‘of the man who marries one’s mother?’ And Monsieur, the personification of puzzled but still gracious hospitality, had politely murmured the name of the gentleman, since deceased, who had married *his* mother. And Mr. Mott made it no better by trying to explain, being unable by that time to remember the end of his story. It was that M. de Beauroman who was now approaching.

Mr. Mott gazed rigidly ahead, stepping softly. Monsieur came closer and closer, a fine, erect, elderly figure in what was obviously intended to be a smart *costume de sport*—a light gray flannel suit, suede shoes to match, golf cap, white carnation, beautiful mustache. He was almost abreast . . .

he *was* abreast. Mr. Mott let his breath go in a sigh of relief. Then—

'*Tiens!* It is Mr. Mott,' Monsieur said in French, doffing his hat and turning. 'What a happiness! My wife and I were desolated not to have found you at home when we called the other day. And Madame Mott, she carries herself well? She does not find the hot times insupportable?' He didn't so much as glance at Mr. Mott's horrid burden, which Mr. Mott had refrained from hurling over a wall, but had merely set down, in order to lift his hat and take the hand of Monsieur. He mumbled out a few politenesses, feeling like an oaf.

Monsieur continued oblivious of the chair, or so thought Mr. Mott. But no: speaking in the tone of a friendly and competent *connoisseur* of such bibelots: 'You are taking the little *chaise-percée* to the merchant of antiques to be appraised, no doubt?' he said with interest.

'No, Monsieur, merely to the *emballeur*, to be sent to its actual owner, the son of a friend,' Mr. Mott replied, blessing the other for his tact.

'Ah, but in that case, there is an excellent man at two paces from here. You will permit me to give myself the pleasure of indicating the road to you, as it is just around the corner?'

'Oh, but never, Monsieur, you are too kind, I could never let myself give you so much trouble,' Mr. Mott protested, being up on that kind of French.

But Monsieur de Beauroman would not be denied the pleasure of escorting Mr. Mott. '*Mais si*, Monsieur, I insist; and as it is clumsy, *ce machin-là*, you must give me the privilege of aiding you to carry it.' And changing his stick to the other hand, he took one arm of the *chaise-percée* and together he and Mr. Mott stepped down the street, bowing and raising their hats gallantly to chance-met acquaintances, the chair gaily swinging between them, Mr. Mott's heart singing with

pride, and the chair itself transformed from a badge of shame into a prince's glittering throne. . . .

'But you should have left it,' said Mrs. Poulter, the owner, when he told her about it a few days later. 'I only paid eight francs for it.'

Mr. Mott smiled. 'You've paid more than that,' he said. 'I gave the shipping man forty-five francs for *emballage* and express.'

'You didn't!'

'I had to. Monsieur de Beauroman insisted on waiting right there until everything arranged itself satisfactorily. Could I haggle? No. I'd cheerfully have paid the man a thousand if he'd asked it. Why, I love that little chair.'

BLUE-PRINTS FOR ANOTHER AMERICAN TRAGEDY

Corey Ford

AYE, Ma'am. A rare privilege, to interview the president of the Theodore Dreiser Hauling and Construction Company, Limited. In person. And so I thought no doubt they would be interested in this chapter to hear his own plans for the next great edifice he is planning.

'Though it seems a pity, Ma'am, he should be dismantling An American Tragedy so soon after it had been completed. Aye, that's America for you. Already tearing up the foundations of a building while they're still hammering down the roof. 'Tis no wonder that novels have no more of a permanence here, Ma'am. In one year and out the other . . .

'However, when the novel I am speaking of in this chapter

is finally finished, it will doubtless last forever. If only because no one else will ever have the patience to tear it down again . . . aye . . .'

Dusk—of a summer night. And the tall walls of an American novel of perhaps 250,000 words—such walls as in time may linger as a mere fable.

And in the center of this tall edifice, or building, a solitary man working alone very patiently by himself—a man of about fifty years, tall, with blue overalls, heavily built, yet not stout, perhaps five feet ten inches or five feet eleven inches in height, wearing a khaki shirt, with gray hair, open at the neck, black shoes, white socks, with a slight stoop, also suspenders, holding in one hand a hod, similar to the hod which is carried by a hod-carrier in one hand, and in the other hand a small trowel, or spade, like the spade, or trowel, carried by another hod-carrier, or else by the same hod-carrier in the other hand, provided of course there is nothing in the other hand of this first hod-carrier at the time, such as a carnation.

This tall, heavily built, yet not stout, man works, or *worked*, because our description is over now, very patiently, or conscientiously, sweating in silence, like an elephant piling one block on top of another block with his trunk, except that this man whom we are speaking of was *removing* one block from another block, and had, in addition, no trunk, although on the other hand he wore, unlike an elephant, blue overalls. He would take one block from another block and put it in his hod, and then he would take the second block from a third block, and the third block from still a fourth block, putting the last block into his hod on top of the second block, which was resting meantime on the first block, after which he would lift up the hod containing the blocks on to his shoulder and climb down a ladder to the ground, whereon

he would then dump the three blocks, increasing the total number of blocks on the ground to the same extent to which he had decreased the total number of blocks on the building. (Three. *Ans.*)

Having dumped the blocks on to the ground from his hod in this fashion, he would pick up the first block, or the second block, and place it on top of the third, or first, block, adding to that the second, or first, or third, block, depending on the order in which he had picked them up from the ground on to which he had dumped them from his hod. Before he placed each block on top of the next block, however, he would first pat the top of the preceding block with his spade, or trowel, in order to cover it with cement, a process which, however, was not very successful, owing to the fact that he had no cement on his trowel, or spade, and consequently the third block would immediately tumble down from the second block, and the second block would tumble down from the first block, with the result that all three blocks would be back on the ground again, where they had started from, and he would burst into tears.

At this John Riddell—myself, as I chanced to be—who, up to this point, had taken no part in the conversation, there being no conversation to take part in, said:

‘What are these blocks which you are removing, or rearranging, by endeavoring to pile them up again?’

At this the man in blue overalls, stooping over, arose to his feet and wiped his eyes, addressing the other man who had asked him the preceding question.

‘Dese blocks dat youse see,’ he began, speaking in the up-to-date slang, or Broadwayese, which he often employed to indicate an uncouth laborer, ‘are paragraphs from my old novel, “An American Tragedy,” which I am at present dismantling, in order ter construct a bigger novel. Hully gee. Upsedaisy.’

‘But how can you make these new paragraphs fit together?’

this from another passerby, a stranger named Gordon Reeper-clotz, whose wife had disappeared in 1879 with a glass-blower from Schenectady, a town in which they lived at the time, and who does not appear in our story again.

'I may not have much idea of what youse call construction,' replied the speaker in blue overalls, the man who was being addressed by the other, 'but I got lots of patience. I got all de patience in de woild. All de time in de woild. All de woids in de woild . . .'

At the same time that he was speaking, he was also operating a small 'steam-shovel,' or crane, which, when he pushed a lever, or pulled a lever, would bury its nose into the ground, or lift up a scoopful of dirt, depending upon whether he had pushed the lever, or pulled it. The man, the speaker, now pointed to the nose of this 'steam-shovel,' which was buried in the ground, he having pushed the lever, and said distinctly:

'Dirt.'

'What is it for?' was John Riddell's question.

'To make more bricks. More bricks, more dirt. More dirt, more material.'

'I should think you'd have enough material left over from "An American Tragedy."'

'Oh, but this is—oh, but dis is going ter be a much bigger effort,' this from the other speaker, the first. 'In fact, in spite of all de bricks, which, owing to de fact dat I have dismantled it, still, because of de scope of dis new woik, and also because of de . . . because of de . . .'

'Better take a deep breath and begin again,' cautioned Riddell.

The man, the first speaker, took a deep breath. 'De effort I am planning,' he began again, 'is ter be de biggest effort ever attempted in America. In fact,' taking from the rear-pocket of his blue overalls, which was in front of him, owing to the fact that he was wearing them backwards, a roll

of blue-prints, 'it, when completed, will measure 146'×127'×139'×260' in addition ter being 476' tall, and weighing altogether 541¾ tons, de heaviest volume in America, as well as de fattest, longest, thickest, dullest . . .' And he mopped his forehead with the blue-prints.

'But where is the entrance?' curiously. This from Riddell.

'Oh, dere isn't going ter *be* any entrance,' replied the first. 'Nobody is ever going ter want ter get inter dis building. Youse see, I've been wasting too much space in all my other efforts,' he said, 'and so dis one, as an improvement, is going ter be completely solid throughout.'

The younger, and shorter, of the two men, John Riddell, looked at the blue-prints in the hand of the other man, who was older than he, likewise his senior in age. 'How many stories?' he inquired.

'Just one story,' the other replied. 'De same story I always use. Boy loves girl, bip!—tragedy. Dat's life. Hot dam. *Git a horse!*'

So saying, the latter speaker, he in blue overalls—a man about fifty years of age, perhaps older, yet already known in America as the Master Builder, because of his diligence, or patience—began to pile one block on top of another block, and another block on top of that block, and another block on top of *that* block, and *another* block on top of *that* block . . . and ano . . . hau . . . hau . . . *haaugh* . . .

Will you lower the shade a little as you go out?

LOOY, DOT EPSOM-MINDED DOPE, NEARLY BUYS A HUSS

Milt Gross

SECOND FLOOR—Wot was de rizzon wot it was reenging by you a whole day de telaphun yesterday, Meesus Feitlebaum??

FIRST FLOOR—Hmm—Dun't esk!!!—Sotch tings wot it heppens by oss on accout from mine Looy, dot dope, you'll wouldn't find in de whole America.

SECOND FLOOR—So, wot was?

FIRST FLOOR—Was so:—Mine Looy he takes all from a sodden a motion in de hempty had wot he should recite in de contry. So he puts in in de noospaper a hedwertisement wot it should ridd so: 'Copple wot dey now reciting in ceety would like wot dey should poichiss a one family houze in soboibs.'

SECOND FLOOR—Hmmm—A 'Hone you hone home' beezness it stoddod opp, ha? So wot was?

FIRST FLOOR—Wait yet. So dot dope wot he's so epsom-minded wot he don't looking wot he does, so instat he should spell 'houze' witt a Hache, witt a Ho, witt a Yoo, witt a Hess, witt a Hee—so he makes a Hache-Ho-HARR-Hess-Hee—wot it spalls 'Huss'!!—Noo-noo—so dun't esk!!! It geeves a reeng de telaphun so I geeve a yell, 'Hollo, who you weesh, plizze?' So it geeves me a henswer a woice wot it saz, 'Ginsboig's Leeverly Staple spicking. We sanding opp a huss!!' So I sad, 'Who ordered here a huss, plizze??' So you should hear a cursory lengwidge witt oats wot he was swerring—

SECOND FLOOR—Yi yi yi yi yi—

FIRST FLOOR—So you should hear wot it was calling opp a

whole day all kinds from timmsters witt paddlers witt hocksters witt a weteranary sturgeon yat, wot was trattening all kinds from liable suits witt demeges—

THIRD FLOOR—So Isodor (SMACK) de momma's seelk stockings you feeling dem opp witt flour already ha? (SMACK.) A Hollowin beezness we nidd it yat, ha? (SMACK.)—Witt chuck you got to make mocks ulso on de front from de houze, ha? (SMACK.) Wot it should stott opp witt de jenitor hoguments wot he should make me maybe a bleck heye, yat, ha (SMACK)? Tomorrow'll be maybe anodder holiday (SMACK) wot you'll feel opp maybe witt Plester from Peris de hot wodder beg, ha (SMACK), wot you should geeve witt it batter de bums on de hed a knock (SMACK).

FOURTH FLOOR—Oohoo, nize baby itt opp all de Pust Tustizz, so momma'll gonna tell you a Ferry Tale from Bloobidd. Wance oppon a time was leeving a nubblemán in a keistle wot it was by heem blue de wheeskers. So all de keeds from de neighborhoot dey gave heem a neekname, 'Bloobidd.' (Nize baby, take anodder spoon Pust Tustizz.)

POT TWO

So he tried witt all kinds from proxite witt hanna—witt lemons, witt tee-livvs, witt hair tyes wot he should make maybe de wheeskers idder dey should be rad odder blound, odder ivin grinn. Bot de more wot he tried de woister it bicaame blue. So was a conseederable sauce from annoyance wot it gritted heem from de keeds so: 'Yoohoo, Hollo Bloobidd! Hollo keed!! Filling blue in de wheeskers, maybe?' und all kinds from odder tsimilar tunts.

POT TREE

So he gredually got merried. So de neighbors began to nuttice wot it deesapeared mysteerously foist one wife den gredu-

ally anodder wife den a toid wife till it made a tuttle from savan wifes wot dey deesapeared. So he merried gredually a hate wife.

POT FUR

So wan day he sad: 'Dollink, I got to go on de road for a leedle treep on beezness. So here is mine kizz. In all de rooms you could go bot rimamber in de leedle room in de hend from de hall you shouldn't dare to wanture. You hear me, ha? So take hidd a warning. Rimamber de mutt witt de flame!! Ulso wot cooriosity keeled wance a Ket. Good-Pye. I'll sand you from Etlentic Ceety some Sult-Wodder teffy!!'

POT FIFE

So de wife was werry werry henxious to know wot it was going on dere in de room so she tutt: 'Hm, I'll geeve jost wan tinny-winny pick in de room so who'll gonna nuttice de deeference?' So all in a flotter she pushed in de key in de door so she gave a look insite so dere it was hall de wifes wot dot doidy goot-for-notting keeled dem—dot weeked critchure!!! So on de key it rimmaind a spot so she tried witt all kinds from supp witt wodder with scarring podder witt Old Dutch Clinzzer she should take it huff bot it deedn't helped.

POT SEEX

So it arrifed home Bloobidd. So he sad, 'Noo, Fatimma, mine kizz.' So he sad: 'Wot's dees? It's meesing a key! Hm, you gattting pale? Ha! C'mon keed—Punny opp!!' So she gave him de key wot it was de mock on it yat so he sad: 'Hm, is diss a system?? It simms wot I must chop you off de had!!' So she plidded witt heem und cuxxed heem. So she sad: 'Geeve me at list a hour I should write mine pipple!!'

So dot hod-hotted ting sad: 'Notting doong!'

So she sad: 'So make it trickwoddors from a hour.'

So he sad: 'Notting doong.'

So she sad: 'Make it a heff from a hour.'

So he sad: 'Notting doong.'

So she sad: 'Make it feeftin minnets.'

So he sad: 'Hm. Go, hoggue witt a woman. Ho K—
feeftin minnets.'

So in de minntime it came along on hussbeck two soldiers
wot dey roshed in queeck so dey cut a hold from Bloobidd
so dey chopped him off de had witt de wheeskers togadder.

(Hm, sotch a dollink baby, ate up all de Pust Tustizz.)

THE LAST DAY

Robert Benchley

WHEN, during the long winter evenings, you sit around the snap-shot album and recall the merry, merry times you had on your vacation, there is one day which your memory mercifully overlooks. It is the day you packed up and left the summer resort to go home.

This Ultimate Day really begins the night before, when you sit up until one o'clock trying to get things into the trunks and bags. This is when you discover the well-known fact that summer air swells articles to twice or three times their original size; so that the sneakers which in June fitted in between the phonograph and the book (which you have never opened), in September are found to require a whole tray for themselves and even then one of them will probably have to be carried in the hand.

Along about midnight, the discouraging process begins to

get on your nerves and you snap at your wife and she snaps at you every time it is found that something won't fit in the suitcase. As you have both gradually dispensed with the more attractive articles of clothing under stress of the heat and the excitement, these little word passages take on the sordid nature of a squabble in an East Side tenement, and all that is needed is for one of the children to wake up and start whimpering. This it does.

It is finally decided that there is no sense in trying to finish the job that night. General nervousness, combined with a specific fear of oversleeping, results in a troubled tossing of perhaps three hours in bed, and ushers in the dawn of the last day on just about as irritable and bleary-eyed a little family as you will find outside an institution.

The trouble starts right away with the process of getting dressed in traveling clothes which haven't been worn since the trip up. Junior's shoulders are still tender, and he decides that it will be impossible for him to wear his starched blouse. One of Philip's good shoes, finding that there has been no call for it during the summer, has become hurt and has disappeared; so Philip has to wear a pair of Daddy's old bathing shoes which had been thrown away. (After everything has been locked and taken out of the room, the good shoe is found in the closet and left for dead.)

You, yourself, aren't any too successful in reverting to city clothes. Several weeks of soft collars and rubber-soled shoes have softened you to a point where the old 'Deroy-14½' feels like a napkin-ring around your neck, and your natty brogans are so heavy that you lose your balance and topple over forward if you step out suddenly. The whole effect of your civilian costume when surveyed in a mirror is that of a Maine guide all dressed up for an outing 'up to Bangor.'

Incidentally, it shapes up as one of the hottest days of the season—or any other season.

'Oh, look how funny Daddy looks in his straw hat!'

'I never realized before, Fred, how much too high the crown is for the length of your face. Are you sure it's your hat?'

'It's my hat, all right,' is the proper reply, 'but maybe the face belongs to somebody else.'

This silences them for a while, but on and off during the day a lot of good-natured fun is had in calling the attention of outsiders to the spectacle presented by Daddy in his 'store' clothes.

Once everyone is dressed, there must be an excursion to take one last look at the ocean, or lake, or whatever particular prank of Nature it may have been which has served as an inducement to you to leave the city. This must be done before breakfast. So down to the beach you go, getting your shoes full of sand, and wait while Sister, in a sentimental attempt to feel the water for the last time, has tripped and fallen in, soaking herself to the garters. There being no dry clothes left out, she has to go in the kitchen and stand in front of the stove until at least one side of her is dry.

Breakfast bears no resemblance to any other meal eaten in the place. There is a poorly-suppressed feeling that you must hurry, coupled with the stiff collar and tight clothes, which makes it practically impossible to get any food down past the upper chest.

Then follows one of the worst features of the worst of all vacation days—the good-byes. It isn't that you hate to part company with these people. They too, as they stand there in their summer clothes, seem to have undergone some process whereby you see them as they really are and not as they seemed when you were all together up to your necks in water or worrying a tennis ball back and forth over a net. And you may be sure that you, in your town clothes, seem doubly unattractive to them.

Here is Mrs. Tremble, who lives in Montclair, N.J., in

the winter. That really is a terrible hat of hers, now that you get a good look at it. 'Well, good-bye, Mrs. Tremble. Be sure to look us up if you ever get out our way. We are right in the telephone book, and we'll have a regular get-together meeting. . . . Good-bye, Marian. Think of us tonight in the hot city, and be sure to let us know when you are going through . . . Well, so long, Mr. Prothero; look out for those girls up at the post office. Don't let any of them marry you . . . Well, we're off, Mrs. Rostetter. Yes, we're leaving today. On the 10:45. We have to be back for Junior's school. It begins on the 11th. *Good-bye!*

It is then found that there is about an hour to wait before the machine comes to take you to the station; so all these good-byes have been wasted and have to be gone through with again.

In the meantime, Mother decides that she must run over to the Bide-a-Wee cottage and say good-bye to the Sisbys. The children feel that they are about due for another last look at the ocean. And Daddy remembers that he hasn't been able to shut the big suitcase yet. So the family disperses in various directions and each unit gets lost. Mother, rushing out from the Sisbys' in a panic thinking that she hears the automobile, is unable to find the others. Little Mildred, having taken it upon herself to look out for the other children while they are gazing on the ocean, has felt it incumbent on her to spank Philip for trying to build one last tunnel in the sand, resulting in a bitter physical encounter in which Philip easily batters his sister into a state of hysteria. Daddy, having wilted his collar and put his knee through his straw hat in an attempt to jam the suitcase together, finds that the thing can't be done and takes out the box of sea-shells that Junior had planned to take home for his cabinet, and hides them under the bed.

The suitcase at last having been squeezed shut and placed

with the rest of the bags in the hall, the maid comes running up with five damp bathing suits which she has found hanging on the line and wants to know if they belong here. Daddy looks cautiously down the hall and whispers: 'No!'

At last the automobile arrives and stands honking by the roadside. 'Come, Junior, quick, put your coat on! . . . Have you got the bag with the thermos? . . . Hurry, Philip! . . . Where's Sister? . . . Come, Sister! . . . Well, it's too late now. You'll have to wait till we get on the train . . . Good-bye, Mrs. Tremble . . . Be sure to look us up . . . Good-bye, everybody! . . . Here, Junior! Put that down! You can't take that with you. No, no! That belongs to that other little boy . . . *Junior!* . . . Good-bye, Marian! . . . Good-bye, Mrs. McNerdle! . . . Philip, say good-bye to Mrs. McNerdle, she's been so good to you, don't you remember? Good-bye. Mrs. McNerdle, that's right . . . *Good-bye!*'

And with that the automobile starts, the friends on the porch wave and call out indistinguishable pleasantries, Junior begins to cry, and it is found that Ed has no hat.

The trip home in the heat and cinders is enlivened by long-remembered reminiscences: 'Well, it's eleven o'clock. I suppose they're all getting into their bathing suits now. How'd you like to jump into that old ocean right this minute, eh?' (As a matter of fact, the speaker has probably not been induced to go into 'that old ocean' more than three times during the whole summer.)

The fact that they reach home too late to get a regular dinner and have to go to bed hungry, and the more poignant impressions in the process of opening a house which has been closed all summer, have all been treated of before in an article called 'The Entrance Into the Tomb.' And so we will leave our buoyant little family, their vacation ended, all ready to jump into the swing of their work, refreshed, invigorated, and clear-eyed.

A MODEL DIALOGUE

In which is shown how the drawing-room juggler may be permanently cured of his card trick

Stephen Leacock

THE drawing-room juggler, having slyly got hold of the pack of cards at the end of the game of whist, says:

'Ever see any card tricks? Here's rather a good one; pick a card.'

'Thank you, I don't want a card.'

'No, but just pick one, any one you like, and I'll tell which one you pick.'

'You'll tell who?'

'No, no; I mean, I'll know which it is, don't you see? Go on now, pick a card.'

'Any one I like?'

'Yes.'

'Any colour at all?'

'Yes, yes.'

'Any suit?'

'Oh, yes; do go on.'

'Well, let me see, I'll—pick—the—ace of spades.'

'Great Cæsar! I mean you are to pull a card out of the pack.'

'Oh, to pull it out of the pack! Now I understand. Hand me the pack: All right—I've got it.'

'Have you picked one?'

'Yes, it's the three of hearts. Did you know it?'

'Hang it! Don't tell me like that. You spoil the thing. Here, try again. Pick a card.'

'All right, I've got it.'

'Put it back in the pack. Thanks. (Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle—flip.)—There, is that it?' (Triumphantly.)

'I don't know. I lost sight of it.'

'Lost sight of it! Confound it, you have to look at it and see what it is.'

'Oh, you want me to look at the front of it!'

'Why, of course! Now then, pick a card.'

'All right. I've picked it. Go ahead.' (Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle—flip.)

'Say, confound you, did you put that card back in the pack?'

'Why, no. I kept it.'

'Holy Moses! Listen. Pick—a—card—just one—look at it—see what it is—then put it back—do you understand?'

'Oh, perfectly. Only I don't see how you are ever going to do it. You must be awfully clever.'

(Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle—flip.)

'There you are; that's your card, now, isn't it?' (This is the supreme moment.)

'No. THAT IS NOT MY CARD.' (This is a flat lie, but Heaven will pardon you for it.)

'Not that card!!!! Say—just hold on a second. Here, now, watch what you're at this time. I can do this cursed thing, mind you, every time. I've done it on father, on mother, and on everyone that's ever come round our place. Pick a card. (Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle—flip, bang.) There, that's your card.'

'No. I AM SORRY. THAT IS NOT MY CARD. But won't you try it again? Please do. Perhaps you are a little excited—I'm afraid I was rather stupid. Won't you go and sit quietly by yourself on the back verandah for half an hour and then try? You

have to go home? Oh, I'm so sorry. It must be such an awfully clever little trick. Good-night!

THE ETIQUETTE OF COURTSHIP

A few words about love

Donald Ogden Stewart

COURTSHIP is one of the oldest of social customs, even antedating in some countries such long-established usages as marriage, or the wearing of white neckties with full evening dress. The beginnings of the etiquette of courtship were apparently connected in some way with the custom of 'love' between the sexes, and many of the old amatory forms still survive in the modern courtship. It is generally agreed among students of the history of etiquette that when 'love' first began to become popular among the better class of younger people they took to it with such avidity that it was necessary to devise some sort of rules for the conduct of formal or informal love-making. These rules, together with various amendments, now constitute the etiquette of courtship.

Suppose, for example, that you are a young gentleman named Richard Roe desirous of entering upon a formal courtship with some refined young girl of fashion. You are also, being a college graduate, engaged in the bond business. One morning there comes into your financial institution a young lady, named Dorothy Doe, who at once attracts your attention by her genteel manners, as exemplified by the fact that she calls the president of your company 'father.' So many young people seem to think it 'smart' to refer to their parents as 'dad' or 'my old man'; you are certain, as soon as you hear

her say 'Hello, father' to your employer, that she is undoubtedly a worthy object of courtship.

CORRECT INTRODUCTIONS: HOW TO MAKE THEM

Your first step should be, of course, the securing of an introduction. Introductions still play an important part in social intercourse, and many errors are often perpetrated by those ignorant of *savoir faire* (correct form). When introducing a young lady to a stranger, for example, it is not *au fait* (correct form) to simply say, 'Mr. Roe, I want you to shake hands with my friend Dorothy.' Under the rules of the *beau monde* (correct form) this would probably be done as follows: 'Dorothy (or Miss Doe), shake hands with Mr. Roe.' Always give the name of the lady first, unless you are introducing someone to the President of the United States, the Archbishop of Canterbury, a member of the nobility above a baron, or a customer. The person who is being 'introduced' then extends his (or her) right ungloved hand and says, 'Shake.' You 'shake,' saying at the same time, 'It's warm (cool) for November (May),' to which the other replies, 'I'll say it is.'

This brings up the interesting question of introducing two people to each other, neither of whose names you can remember. This is generally done by saying very quickly to one of the parties, 'Of course you know Miss Unkunkunk.' Say the last 'unk' very quickly, so that it sounds like any name from Ab to Zinc. You might even sneeze violently. Of course, in nine cases out of ten, one of the two people will at once say, 'I didn't get the name,' at which you laugh, 'Ha! Ha! Ha!' in a carefree manner several times, saying at the same time, 'Well, well—so you didn't get the name—you didn't get the name—well, well.' If the man still persists in wishing to know who it is to whom he is being introduced, the best

procedure consists in simply braining him on the spot with a club or convenient slab of paving stone.

The 'introduction,' in cases where you have no mutual friend to do the introducing, is somewhat more difficult, but can generally be arranged as follows:

Procure a few feet of stout manila rope or clothes-line, from any of the better-class hardware stores. Ascertain (from the Social Register, preferably) the location of the young lady's residence, and go there on some dark evening about nine o'clock. Fasten the rope across the sidewalk in front of the residence about six inches or a foot from the ground. Then, with the aid of a match and some kerosene, set fire to the young lady's house in several places and retire behind a convenient tree. After some time, if she is at home, she will probably be forced to run out of her house to avoid being burned to death. In her excitement she will fail to notice the rope which you have stretched across the sidewalk and will fall. This is your opportunity to obtain an introduction. Stepping up to her and touching your hat politely, you say, in a well-modulated voice, 'I beg your pardon, Miss Doe, but I cannot help noticing that you are lying prone on the sidewalk.' If she is well-bred, she will not at first speak to you, as you are a perfect stranger. This silence, however, should be your cue to once more tip your hat and remark, 'I realize, Miss Doe, that I have not had the honor of an introduction, but you will admit that you are lying prone on the sidewalk. Here is my card—and here is one for Mrs. Doe, your mother.' At that you should hand her two plain engraved calling cards, each containing your name and address. If there are any other ladies in her family—aunts, grandmothers, et cetera—it is correct to leave cards for them also. Be sure that the cards are clean, as the name on the calling card is generally sufficient for identification purposes without the addition of the thumbprint.

When she has accepted your cards, she will give you one of hers, after which it will be perfectly correct for you to assist her to rise from the sidewalk. Do not, however, press your attentions further upon her at this time, but after expressing the proper regret over her misfortune it would be well to bow and retire.

CARDS AND FLOWERS

The next day, however, you should send flowers, enclosing another of your cards. It might be well to write some message on the card recalling the events of the preceding evening—nothing intimate, but simply a reminder of your first meeting and a suggestion that you might possibly desire to continue the acquaintanceship. Quotations from poetry of the better sort are always appropriate; thus, on this occasion, it might be nice to write on the card accompanying the flowers—“This is the forest primeval”—H. W. Longfellow,’ or “Take, oh take, those lips away”—W. Shakespeare.’ You will find there are hundreds of lines equally appropriate for this and other occasions, and in this connection it might be well to display a little originality at times by substituting pertinent verses of your own in place of the conventional quotations. For example—‘This is the forest primeval, I regret your last evening’s upheaval,’ shows the young lady in question that not only are you well-read in classic poetry, but also you have no mean talent of your own. Too much originality, however, is dangerous, especially in polite social intercourse, and I need hardly remind you that the floors of the social ocean are watered with the tears of those who seek to walk on their own hook.

Within a week after you have sent the young lady the flowers, you should receive a polite note of thanks, somewhat as follows: ‘My dear Mr. Roe: Those lovely flowers came quite

as a surprise. They are lovely, and I cannot thank you enough for your thoughtfulness. Their lovely fragrance fills my room as I write, and I wish to thank you again. It was lovely of you.'

FLOWERS AND THEIR MESSAGE IN COURTSHIP

It is now time to settle down to the more serious business of courtship. Her letter shows beyond the shadow of a figurative doubt that she is 'interested,' and the next move is 'up to you.' Probably she will soon come into the office to see her father, in which case you should have ready at hand some appropriate gift, such as, for example, a nice potted geranium. Great care should be taken, however, that it is a plant of the correct species, for in the etiquette of courtship all flowers have different meanings and many a promising affair has been ruined because a suitor sent his lady a buttercup, meaning 'That's the last dance I'll ever take you to, you big cow,' instead of a plant with a more tender significance. Some of the commoner flowers and their meaning in courtship are as follows:

Fringed Gentian—'I am going out to get a shave. Back at three-thirty.'

Poppy—'I would be proud to be the father of your children.'

Golden-rod—'I hear that you have hay fever.'

Tuberose—'Meet me Saturday at the Fourteenth Street subway station.'

Blood-root—'Aunt Kitty murdered Uncle Fred Thursday.'

Dutchman's Breeches—'That case of Holland gin and Old Tailor has arrived. Come on over.'

Iris—'Could you learn to love an optician?'

Aster—'Who was that stout Jewish-looking party I saw you with in the hotel lobby Friday?'

Deadly Nightshade—'Pull down those blinds, quick!'

Passion Flower—'Phone Main 1249—ask for Eddie.'

Raspberry—‘I am announcing my engagement to Charlie O’Keefe Tuesday.’

Wild Thyme—‘I have seats for the Hippodrome Saturday afternoon.’

The above flowers can also be combined to make different meanings, as, for example, a bouquet composed of three tuberoses and some Virginia creeper generally signifies the following, ‘The reason I didn’t call for you yesterday was that I had three inner tube punctures, besides a lot of engine trouble in that old car I bought in Virginia last year. Gosh, I’m sorry!’

But to return to the etiquette of our present courtship. As Miss Doe leaves the office you follow her, holding the potted plant in your left hand. After she has gone a few paces you step up to her, remove your hat (or cap) with your right hand, and offer her the geranium, remarking, ‘I beg your pardon, miss, but didn’t you drop this?’ A great deal depends upon the manner in which you offer the plant and the way she receives it. If you hand it to her with the flower pointing upward it means, ‘Dare I hope?’ Reversed, it signifies, ‘Your petticoat shows about an inch, or an inch and a half.’ If she receives the plant in her right hand, it means, ‘I am’; left hand, ‘You are’; both hands—‘He, she or it is.’ If, however, she takes the pot firmly in both hands and breaks it with great force on your head, the meaning is usually negative and your only correct course of procedure is a hasty bow and a brief apology.

RECEIVING AN INVITATION TO CALL

Let us suppose, however, that she accepts the geranium in such a manner that you are encouraged to continue the acquaintance. Your next move should be a request for an invitation to call upon her at her home. This should, above all

things, not be done crudely. It is better merely to suggest your wish by some indirect method such as, 'Oh—so you live on William Street. Well, well! I often walk on William Street in the evening, but I have never called on any girl there—*yet*.' The 'yet' may be accompanied by a slight raising of your eyebrows, a wink, or a friendly nudge with your elbow. Unless she is unusually 'dense' she will probably 'take the hint' and invite you to come and see her some evening. At once you should say, '*What* evening? How about *tonight*?' If she says that she is already engaged for that evening, take a calendar out of your pocket and remark, 'Tomorrow? Wednesday? Thursday? Friday? I really have no engagements between now and October. Saturday? Sunday?' This will show her that you are really desirous of calling upon her and she will probably say, 'Well, I think I am free Thursday night, but you had better telephone me first.'

THE ETIQUETTE OF TELEPHONING

On Thursday morning, therefore, you should go to a public telephone-booth in order to call the young lady's house. The etiquette of telephoning is quite important and many otherwise perfectly well-bred people often make themselves conspicuous because they do not know the correct procedure in using this modern but almost indispensable invention. Upon entering the telephone-booth, which is located, say, in some drug store, you remove the receiver from the hook and deposit the requisite coin in the coin box. After an interval of some minutes a young lady (referred to as 'Central') will ask for your 'Number, please.' Suppose, for example, that you wish to get Bryant 4310. Remove your hat politely and speak that number into the mouthpiece. 'Central' will then say, 'Rhineland 4310.' To which you reply, 'No, Central—Bryant 4310.' Central then says, 'I beg your pardon—Bryant 4310,'

to which you reply, 'Yes, please.' In a few minutes a voice at the other end of the line says, 'Hello,' to which you answer, 'Is Miss Doe at home?' The voice then says, 'Who?' You say, 'Miss Doe, please—Miss Dorothy Doe.' You then hear the following, 'Wait a minute. Say, Charlie, is they anybody works around here by the name of Doe? There's a guy wants to talk to a Miss Doe. Here—you answer it.' Another voice then says, 'Hello.' You reply, 'Hello.' He says, 'What do you want?' You reply, 'I wish to speak to Miss Dorothy Doe.' He says, 'What department does she work in?' You reply, 'Is this the residence of J. Franklin Doe, President of the First National Bank?' He says, 'Wait a minute.' You wait a minute. You wait several. Another voice—a new voice says—'Hello.' You reply, 'Hello.' He says, 'Give me Stuyvesant 8864.' You say, 'But I'm trying to get Miss Doe—Miss Dorothy Doe.' He says, 'Who?' You say, 'Is this the residence of——' He says, 'Naw—this is Goebel Brothers, Wholesale Grocers—what number do you want?' You say, 'Bryant 4310.' He says, 'Well, this is Rhinelander 4310.' You then hang up the receiver and count twenty. The telephone bell then rings, and inasmuch as you are the only person near the phone you take up the receiver and say, 'Hello.' A female voice says, 'Hello, dearie—don't you know who this is?' You say, politely but firmly, 'No.' She says, 'Guess!' You guess 'Mrs. Warren G. Harding.' She says, 'No. This is Ethel. Is Walter there?' You reply, 'Walter?' She says, 'Ask him to come to the phone, will you? He lives up-stairs over the drug store. Just yell "Walter" at the third door down the hall. Tell him Ethel wants to speak to him—no, wait—tell him it's Madge.' Being a gentleman, you comply with the lady's request. After bringing Walter to the phone, you obligingly wait for some twenty minutes while he converses with Ethel—no, Madge. When he has finished, you once more enter the booth and tell 'Central' you want Bryant 4310. After a few minutes 'Central'

says, 'What number did you call?' You say patiently, 'Bryant 4310.' She replies, 'Bryant 4310 has been changed to Schuyler 6372.' You ask for Schuyler 6372. Finally a woman's voice says, 'Yass.' You say, 'Is Miss Doe in?' She replies, 'Yass.' You say, 'May I speak to her?' She says, 'Who?' You reply, 'You said Miss Doe was at home, didn't you?' She replies, 'Yass.' You say, 'Well, may I speak to her?' The voice says, 'Who?' You shout, 'Miss Doé.' The voice says, 'She ban out.' You shriek, 'Oh, go to hell!' and assuming a graceful, easy position in the booth, you proceed to tear the telephone from the wall. Later on in the day, when you have two or three hours of spare time, you can telephone Miss Doe again and arrange for the evening's visit.

MAKING THE FIRST CALL

The custom of social 'calls' between young men and young women is one of the prettiest of etiquette's older conventions, and one around which clusters a romantic group of delightful traditions. In this day and generation, what with horseless carriages, electric telephones and telegraphs, and dirigible gas bags, a great many of the older forms have been allowed to die out, greatly, I believe, to our discredit. 'Speed, not manners,' seems to be the motto of this century. I hope that there still exist a few young men who care enough about 'good form' to study carefully to perfect themselves in the art of 'calling.' Come, Tom, Dick and Harry—drop your bicycles for an afternoon and fill your minds with something besides steam engines and pneumatic tires!

The first call at the home of any young lady of fashion is an extremely important social function, and too great care cannot be taken that you prepare yourself thoroughly in advance. It would be well to leave your work an hour or two earlier in the afternoon, so that you can go home and practice

such necessary things as entering or leaving a room correctly. Most young men are extremely careless in this particular, and unless you rehearse yourself thoroughly in the proper procedure you are apt to find later on to your dismay that you have made your exit through a window onto the fire-escape instead of through the proper door.

CONVERSATION AND SOME OF ITS USES

✓ Your conversation should also be planned more or less in advance. Select some topic in which you think your lady friend will be interested, such as, for example, the removal of tonsils and adenoids, and 'read up' on the subject so that you can discuss it in an intelligent manner. Find out, for example, how many people had tonsils removed in February, March, April. Contrast this with the same figures for 1880, 1890, 1900. Learn two or three amusing anecdotes about adenoids. Consult Bartlett's 'Familiar Quotations' for appropriate verses dealing with tonsils and throat troubles. Finally, and above all, take time to glance through four or five volumes of Dr. Eliot's Five Foot Shelf, for nothing so completely marks the cultivated man as the ability to refer familiarly to the various volumes of the Harvard classics.

A PROPER CALL

Promptly at the time appointed you should arrive at the house where the young lady is staying. In answer to your ring a German police dog will begin to bark furiously inside the house, and a maid will finally come to the door. Removing your hat and one glove, you say, 'Is Miss Doe home?' The maid replies, 'Yass, ay tank so.' You give her your card and the dog rushes out and bites you on either the right or left leg. You are then ushered into a room in which is seated

an old man with a long white beard. He is fast asleep. 'Dot's grampaw,' says the maid, to which you reply, 'Oh.' She retires, leaving you alone with grampaw. After a while he opens his eyes and stares at you for a few minutes. He then says, 'Did the dog bite you?' You answer, 'Yes, sir.' Grampaw then says, 'He bites everybody,' and goes back to sleep. Reassured, you light a cigaret. A little boy and girl then come to the door, and, after examining you carefully for several minutes, they burst into giggling laughter and run away. You feel to see if you have forgotten to put on a necktie. A severe looking old lady then enters the room. You rise and bow. 'I am Miss Doe's grandmother. Some one has been smoking in here,' she says, and sits down opposite you. Her remark is not, however, a hint for a cigaret and you should not make the mistake of saying, 'I've only got Fatimas, but if you care to try one——' It should be your aim to seek to impress yourself favorably upon every member of the young lady's family. Try to engage the grandmother in conversation, taking care to select subjects in which you feel she would be interested. Conversation is largely the art of 'playing up' to the other person's favorite subject. In this particular case, for example, it would be a mistake to say to Miss Doe's grandmother, 'Have you ever tried making synthetic gin?' or 'Do you think any one will *ever* lick Dempsey?' A more experienced person, and some one who had studied the hobbies of old people, would probably begin by remarking, 'Well, I see that Jeremiah Smith died of cancer Thursday,' or 'That was a lovely burial they gave Mrs. Watts, wasn't it?' If you are tactful, you should soon win the old lady's favor completely, so that before long she will tell you all about her rheumatism and what grampaw can and can't eat.

Finally Miss Doe arrives. Her first words are, 'Have you been waiting long? Hilda didn't tell me you were here,' to which you reply, 'No—I just arrived.' She then says, 'Shall

we go in the drawing-room?' The answer to this is, 'For God's sake, yes!' In a few minutes you find yourself alone in the drawing-room with the lady of your choice and the courtship proper can then begin.

The best way to proceed is gradually to bring the conversation around to the subject of the 'modern girl.' After your preliminary remarks about tonsils and adenoids have been thoroughly exhausted, you should suddenly say, 'Well, I don't think girls—nice girls—are really that way.' She replies, of course, '*What* way?' You answer, 'Oh, the way they are in these modern novels. This "petting," for instance.' She says, '*What* "petting"?' You walk over and sit down on the sofa beside her. 'Oh,' you say, 'these novelists make me sick—they seem to think that in our generation every time a young man and woman are left alone on a lounge together, they haven't a thing better to do than put out the light and "pet." It's disgusting, isn't it?' 'Isn't it?' she agrees and reaching over she accidentally pulls the lamp cord, which puts out the light.

On your first visit you should not stay after 12:30.

THE PROPOSAL PROPER

About the second or third month of a formal courtship it is customary for the man to propose matrimony, and if the girl has been 'out' for three or four years and has several younger sisters coming along, it is customary for her to accept him. They then become 'engaged,' and the courtship is concluded.

THE COLOR OF MICE

E. B. White

Nothing pleases me more than an old belt. When age has limbered it, a belt grows increasingly precious, for in its abandoned notches a man traces the lively story of his youth. I need only look at the first knife-punched hole in my belt to read a whole saga of the girded loin and remember how, in the presence of other boys, I used to hitch myself tight with a jerk of bravado and a slight pain in the stomach. An old belt like that is not to be lightly discarded, merely because it's old.

Probably my wife did not realize how I felt about belts when she called me across the room the other evening.

'What is that leather thing holding your pants up?' she asked.

'That's my old belt and we won't go into it any further,' I replied. 'It is *my* belt, it is comfortable, and it reminds me of days gone by.'

'Well,' she said, 'it reminds me of old pieces of rope, old window-shade tassels, and old halters that are found after barns burn down. Take it off and buy yourself a new one.'

'Not the slightest chance,' I remarked.

'Well, then, wear a vest. You can't go around looking like that.'

We did not discuss belts any more that evening. We might, in truth, never have discussed belts again all our lives had not I gone into a haberdasher's shop the next morning to buy a shirt because my clean ones had run out. I noticed

that the salesman, whom I did not like, eyed me as he wrapped the parcel—much as my wife had eyed me the night before. As I started to go, he came round the corner of the counter, stealthily. He took my arm.

‘Can I interest you in a belt?’ he asked.

What transpired from then on is just what transpires in hundreds of haberdasheries every day in the week—the native resolution, the faltering voice, the lure of the article, the glittering eye, the gradual breaking down of the spirit, the ultimate sale, the whimpering, broken man going out through the door with an extra parcel under his arm. Only in my case it was worse, because the clerk not only sold me a belt, he sold me a mouse-gray belt. He said mouse-gray was the thing.

All day at the office I wore my old belt. But on the way upstairs to the apartment I slipped the new one on, fretfully aware that the notch was not in the right place, annoyed at the strange pressure and the stiffness.

‘Now what have you done?’ said my wife, when I took my coat off.

‘Well, who started all this belt trouble, anyway?’ I wanted to know. ‘You said get a new belt, so I did.’

‘No, you didn’t,’ she replied, ‘because that thing is going right back where it came from, so take it off quick before the notch gets noticeable.’

‘Listen,’ I began, ‘this belt is mouse-gray, and if you knew anything at all you’d know that mouse-gray is the thing.’

‘Come over here, my little man,’ said my wife. So I went over. ‘Now don’t you realize that you’ll get into trouble with that belt?’

‘What d’you mean, trouble?’

‘I mean it may attract mice.’

‘You make me sick,’ I said. ‘Anyway, it isn’t exactly a mouse-gray—it’s more a battleship-gray.’

‘Well, it may attract battleships,’ said my wife, who thinks

she is funny. Again we dropped the discussion, and I went to sleep that night vowing to wear the new gray belt for a few days merely as a gesture, and then work gradually back into my old one later. But this is really where my story begins.

I had hardly got to the bottom of the stairs next morning, when I looked down and saw that a little mouse was following me.

'G'wan!' I cried, waving my *Herald Tribune* at him. 'Git out of here!' But he still came on, scurrying along from step to step, nose to the ground. 'Hey!' I screamed, rushing through the door and down the street toward the Elevated. As I passed the Greek's on the corner, another mouse ran out and joined the first. The two of them came bristling up the Elevated steps, right at my heels, and on the platform one of them boldly started up my trouser-leg. 'Phoo! You can't do that!' I yelled, swatting the climbing one. But the words had barely rung out across the morning when a third mouse leapt from the old stove in the ticket office and began to advance toward me.

I rode uptown with the three of them under my coat, snuggled against my belt, and pretended bravely that I was enjoying the editorials in the paper.

At Forty-second Street I got off, quite frightened, and wondering what my next move would be. I wished I had paid some attention to my wife, but there was very little time to think about her. People were already beginning to notice that I had mice. Some of the women in the 'L' station were screaming, in a fragmentary way. Dodge along as I might, I could not elude the three little mice, and they came leaping and playing down the steps with me to the street.

For a moment I just stood still on the sidewalk. I did not dare take my belt off for fear my trousers would come down; it seemed to me that would be worse than mice. It

did not particularly surprise me that a fourth mouse appeared from under the news-stand and climbed my leg—worse than the others in his fresh frenzy to get at my mouse-colored belt.

Even in my bewilderment I could not help noticing that the town, at Forty-second Street and Sixth Avenue, seemed to be noisier than usual. The roar of the 'L,' the banging of the crosstown cars, the grinding of horns, the screams of the terrified women leaping out of the way of my mice—these sounds were dimmed in a mighty crashing sound that seemed to be coming from the general direction of Riverside Drive. It grew louder as I stood there, and it soon became mingled with the distant sound of shattered glass and falling timbers and twisting steel. I looked upward. The sky was full of black smoke. I had a feeling that I was being swept back into another period, a glacial time. I had a feeling that I didn't even know what the little boy was talking about who came racing madly down Sixth Avenue, screaming 'Battleships!'

It was all true. The battleships were coming—mowing down everything before them in their relentless haste to get to my belt. Already I could see the sun glint from their wet sides, the lean guns advancing, the knife-blades of the prows, the belching stacks clouding the sky. With only one course left open, I lost no time.

'Take this,' I said, slipping off my belt and handing it to the nearest lady, before she could see that there were some mice that went with it. As I did so, my trousers rippled to the ground and I sprang, half naked and wholly nimble, into the nearest haberdashery. With no surprise at all I heard an unctuous voice begin, 'Can I interest you in some B.V.D.'s?'

THE PARROT

Will Cuppy

THE PARROT doesn't know what he's talking about, but we do. Sometimes he says things that fit in, like anybody else. His language is very broadening if you understand Portuguese. The Parrot's tendency to talk varies inversely as to the square of his gray matter. Or rather it would if he had any gray matter.¹ The Parrot mates for life. Parrots are not very passionate. They have truncated mandibles. In the old square-rigger days the Parrot was used as an engagement ring. During a week ashore a sailor would frequently employ as many as forty-nine Parrots in this way in New Bedford alone. Those were called the good old days. The sagacity of the Parrot is well known. He can be taught to imitate a dog fight, spill the ink, step into the dessert, smash porcelain vases, laugh like a hyena, and say the same thing over and over for hours at a time. He is highly esteemed for his habit of biting out small portions of the human face. Parrots are often improved by rapping them smartly on the merry-thought, or furcula, with a sledgehammer. Parrots reckon time by walnuts, one walnut equalling an hour and a half. They are also fond of papaws, hawthorn berries, peach stones, capsicum, and the legs of Hepplewhite chairs.² Parrots live

¹Aristotle found Parrots more talkative when drunk. They haven't changed much.

²The curvilinear contours of Hepplewhite and Chippendale appear to attract Parrots more than the somewhat severer lines of Sheraton. Parrots are even happier with the much more edible Regency and Louis XV pieces.

two hundred years and finally become heirlooms. You can tell people who have inherited several Parrots.³

HOW TO KEEP A BEE

A scientific Investigation of Love-Life in the Apiary

Corey Ford

ALTHOUGH the most industrious of our little furred and feathered cousins, the bee has only lately come into his own. In recent years, however, bee-keeping has been on the increase everywhere, and on their country estates amateur fanciers are taking up the Honey Bee with interest, and setting it down again even more quickly.

What more sedate hobby for an elderly banker of a retiring disposition, as well as income, than to conduct an *apiary* in a corner of his garden? Here he may construct his hives and raise the occupants; here he may secure the rich dripping honey; or of a pleasant summer's day, armed with binoculars and a notebook, he may station himself on a nearby hill and observe with comparative safety the swarming and industry of these busy denizens of the air.

Bees may be distinguished from all the other *Hymenoptera*, such as nasturtiums, by means of the hind *tarsus*, which is a sort of overalls or jumper that the bee wears while fooling around the pollen. These tarsi are attached by means of *tro-*

³A Parrot belonging to Dennis O'Kelly, sometimes called Colonel O'Kelly or Count O'Kelly, could sing the 104th Psalm, 'The Banks of the Dee' and 'God Save the King' with the utmost precision, which was more than Count O'Kelly could do. Count O'Kelly died in 1787, the Parrot surviving until 1802.

chanters, or suspenders. If the insect is picked up between the thumb and right forefinger and held under a powerful microscope, the basal segment of the tarsus will appear to be more or less dilated, flattened, and usually hairy, proving that the insect is a bee. On the other hand, if you have tried to pick the insect up between your thumb and right forefinger, you will have found out that it was a bee anyway. A bee is nobody's fool.

The common Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*) exists in communities that number from 10,000 to 60,000 individuals; and these are divided into three classes. One is the female bee, or *queen*, one to a community, who is capable of almost unlimited production of eggs, sometimes laying as many as three thousand in a good full day at the office. Another class consists of the males, or *drones*, of which there are several thousand. No one has ever explained just *why* there are several thousand in such a restricted community as this; and it is commonly supposed that they just sit around and play poker all day, as they do at the Lambs Club. The third and most common class is known as the *workers*, who, between you and me, are neither little boy bees nor little girl bees, but are made of worsted.

The males, or *drones*, may be distinguished from the females by the fact that they wear trousers. In addition the eyes of these drones are remarkably large and meet at the top of the head. As a result of this the bee always fancies that he is going left when he is flying right, and at the same time he imagines that he is going right when he is flying left; consequently he proceeds due north in a straight line. The fact that he is cross-eyed would also be rather dangerous if he were to try to climb a ladder, but fortunately bees never climb ladders. Neither do they spin.

The nuptial flight of the *queen bee* takes place high in the air, and usually within a few days after she has left her cell.

With a sly glance she drops her handkerchief behind a group of males, and at once springs coyly into the air, followed by the entire flock. Higher and higher they circle, the males endeavoring frantically to catch her until, panting and exhausted, they drop back to the hive again one by one, declaring that, shoot! no woman was ever worth that much trouble. Finally only the strongest male is left. Later the happy queen returns to her hive, where she devotes herself thenceforth to a sedate motherhood and the increase of her tribe.

It is not until the following afternoon that one of the workers, hearing a faint scratching outside, discovers on the doorstep a pathetic wreck with his hair full of hay and dark rings under his eyes. When sufficiently revived he is heard to announce, in a hoarse whisper, that he is off women for life, and how do you get to be a Worker?

The care and culture of these really fascinating creatures is best conducted in an *apiary* or collection of beehives. These buildings may be constructed of glass in case the owner wishes to observe the more intimate home-life of the bees; but, for practical purposes, wood and straw are most commonly employed, and hives may be made from old cracker boxes, barrels, and egg crates. In some cases hives are also made from eating lobsters or crabs, and may be treated by applying dilute acids or bichloride of mercury to the affected parts.

Anyone with a bent for mechanics and plenty of time on his hands can make his own apiary; and in this work the directions are fairly simple. The most popular form of hive was invented by Langstroth, who spent a number of years among bees, disguised in a checkered cap and a week's growth of beard and living with a queen named Mildred. In the course of his investigations, Langstroth found that he could always make the best honey when he was standing up; and consequently the modern hives are all built straight up

and down. Outside the front of the brood apartment is a large *alighting board*, upon which the bees come sliding down as they whiz by through the air, bracing all their six or eight feet as they skid across the smooth surface, and backing air violently until they come to a halt and dismount, slapping off the dusty pollen with their riding crops.

Through the door they pass into the spacious front hall of the hive, from which they may enter the parlor, library, and kitchen. To the right a broad flight of stairs leads seductively to the queen's chambers or workrooms; and the rest of the hive is given over to the stockrooms and the nursery. These apiaries are located in a good neighborhood, with plenty of sunlight and running water and not a ten-minute walk from the station. Consult Maeterlinck, 'The Life of the Bee,' or your own broker.

Bees must eat, like all the rest of us; for what one of us great, hulking humans does not depend upon his groceries after all? For this purpose the careful bee keeper must see that his hives are always supplied with fresh-cut flowers. In the summer a handful of roses will do the trick, and may be left in a cut-glass vase in the center of the stockroom, with a visiting card and some formal sentiment. In the winter, however, flowers are not always secured so easily; and it is often wiser to fill the hives with artificial poinsettias, which are just as cheery and bright and last much longer. Although adult bees feed on saccharine juices, such as lemon soda, the little larvæ are fed by their elders on 'bee bread,' a sort of whole-wheat biscuit which is very good when spread with *honey*. This honey, as it is called, may be purchased at any convenient dairy.

In order to aid the insect in reaching the nectar which lies at the bottom of tube-like flowers, the bee is equipped with a prolonged mouthpiece or *proboscis*, with which it flits from blossom to blossom in the air. This proboscis is similar to the

trunk of an elephant, except that elephants do not flit around in the air, or a fine state of things we'd be in, to be sure.

Gradually in the course of the year the queen becomes restless; her agitation extends through the hive; and one night at supper somebody suggests that if tomorrow is a fine day, they may as well go off for a *swarm*. The idea takes like hot cakes; and then what a hustle and a bustle pervades the whole hive! 'We are going swarming!' the larvæ cry; and the tin pails and shovels are brought down from the attic, and the swarming suits taken out of moth balls. Meantime the workers scurry back and forth, back and forth, spreading the peanut butter sandwiches, wrapping the hard-boiled eggs in paraffin paper, and packing the baskets for the morrow! The ordinary work of the community is practically neglected.

The morning of Swarming Day dawns bright and clear. All is in readiness, the lunch is packed and the tent is strapped along the running board, and now with such a buzzing and such a humming as you never heard, the queen bee rushes forth from the hive, followed by a throng of other bees which forms a regular cloud in the air. On they fly, across the yard, looking for a comfortable spot without any mosquitoes; and at last they settle down on a branch of the syringa three feet away, where they hang by their claws in a dense cluster until the owner lowers them, tired but happy, into another hive, and the swarming is over! Well done, little bees! Who shall say that you will not dream tonight of the gay adventures you have had? I, for one, if I know anything about bees.

Bees require particular attention at the time of swarming, so that they will not fly away and become lost. Sometimes a bee fails to return, and advertisements in the local papers show little or no results. In this case the owner should secure a rich, nectar-laden flower like a calla lily; and with this lily held in his left hand and a butterfly net in his right, he should

advance on his knees through the shrubbery until he snares the errant bee, or else is arrested.

When the bees have been raised to maturity, and the amateur bee keeper has successfully conducted his apiary through the long summer months, he is now ready to remove the honey from the hives. This is best done in the heat of the day; and the equipment consists of rubber gloves, veil, and an onion cut in half to take out the sting. A gentle tapping sometimes causes the bees to leave the combs, in one direction or another; and chloroform will be found useful at this point, particularly when taken by the bee keeper.

When everything is in readiness, the best process is invariably as follows: advance to a telephone, seize the receiver firmly in the left hand and the mouthpiece in the right, and call up a neighboring farmer named Frank.

And, for a nominal fee, I am sure that Frank will be very glad to show you how to remove the honey from the hives.

MARTHA HEPPLETHWAITE

Frank Sullivan

LOOKS like rain, Miss Hepplethwaite. . . . See that little cloud over there? . . . Well, that's what is called an ominous little cloud. . . . All severe electric storms start with ominous little clouds. . . . It's getting bigger. . . . You are pale, Miss Hepplethwaite. . . . Are you afraid of lightning? . . . You're not afraid of it but you are afraid of being hit by it. . . . Well, I'd call that quibbling, and there's only one thing worse than quibbling, Miss Hepplethwaite, and that is quoits. . . . No, I like quilts. . . . You are afraid, my dear. . . . You can't conceal it, because

your teeth just dropped out and they are still chattering down there behind the incoming letter basket, or, as you like to call it, the wastebasket. . . . Don't be afraid, my dear. . . . Ah, that was a crash. . . . It will be a magnificent storm. . . . I wish Ben Franklin were here. . . . Child, you're positively shimmying with fear. . . . Is it as bad as all that? . . . Put your typewriter down and come over here by Mr. Sullivan. . . . There, there, poor child. . . . Nothing can harm you while Mr. Sullivan has you in his keeping. . . . Nestle close. . . . Put your arms around Mr. Sullivan's neck. . . . Ah, ah, don't touch that watch and chain now. . . . Watches and chains are conductors of lightning. . . . You know you're quite an armful, Miss Hepplethwaite. . . . You ought to avoid butter, sweets and eggs. . . . I know it's awfully hard to avoid eggs. . . . No matter where you go you meet them. . . . Oh, THAT was a clap of thunder, wasn't it! . . . I never heard such baritone thunder. . . . Don't hug Mr. Sullivan so tight, my dear. . . . You'll choke him. . . . After all, I'd prefer death by lightning to death by slow strangulation. . . . They say your whole life passes before you when you die by strangulation and I'd hate to see mine over again. . . . Yes, indeedy, a bum show. . . . It's getting darker.

How magnificent an electric storm is if you're not out in it. . . . The rain comes slashing by in white sheets. . . . Drops as big as your solitaire are splashing on the ledge outside. . . . The black clouds are scurrying across the sky like pickaninies late for school. . . . The trees in City Hall Park are bent under the weight of the storm. . . . Hark to that thunder, how it cracks and roars. . . . See the men down on the plaza. . . . How small they look from up here. . . . See how they scud for shelter before the gale, like ants rushing to escape from some giant's heel. . . . Poor little fools. . . . Don't be nervous. . . . Cuddle close to me. . . . Lightning cannot strike this office, my dear, because everything in here has been charged. . . .

That one looks as if it struck the boss's office. . . . Yes, it did, see it falling down all crumpled and torn and baffled. . . . I wish it would stop. . . . I am not trembling. . . . Anybody is entitled to a tremble or two a week, and if I choose to take mine now, who shall say me nay? . . . Mm, it's coming louder and louder. . . . I ought to clean out beneath that desk, do you know it? . . . No, I'm not afraid. . . . I've been going to clean out beneath that desk for years. . . . And I've been promising myself to spend an afternoon under that desk for months. . . . Bang, there goes another one! . . . Let go, Miss Hepplethwaite, I'm going underneath the desk. . . . I am NOT afraid, let go my neck. . . . What you trying to do, beat me under that desk? . . . No, you don't. . . . 'Women and children last' is the motto around this office. . . . You get under your own desk. . . . There goes another one. . . . Good-bye. . . . Let me know when it's stopped raining.

ARTICLE ON FISHING

Robert Benchley

ALONG about the time when the first crocuses are getting frozen for having popped out too soon (and, by the way, you might think that after thousands of years of coming up too soon and getting frozen, the crocus family would have had a little sense knocked into it) the old lure of the rubber-boot begins to stir, and Fred and I begin to say, 'remember that time——?' From then on the *descensus* is *facilis*, unless you know what I mean.

Out come the rods from the attic, and several evenings are spent in fingering over the cards bearing the remnants of last

season's Silver Doctors, Jolly Rogers, Golden Bantams, or whatever they are called. Inveterate fisherman that I am, I have never been able to take seriously the technical names for flies. It is much simpler to refer to them as 'this one' and 'that one' and is less embarrassing if you happen to be self-conscious. The man who made up the names for flies must have been thwarted in a lifelong desire to have children, and at last found that outlet for his suppressed babytalk.

'Well, I'll tell you,' says Fred, 'I could get off for about ten days and perhaps we could run up to Rippling Creek.'

'If you can get off as easy as that for ten days to run up to any place,' says Mrs. Fred, 'you can run up to the attic and put up that partition around the trunk-room. The boards have been lying up there ready since last October.'

'Who said I could get off for ten days?' replies Fred, hotly. 'I said I might be able to get off for a day or two. I don't know. I doubt very much if I could make it.'

So Fred doesn't go on the trip.

But there are three or four of us who do, and we start to leave about four weeks before the train is ready. George has to buy some new flannel shirts. These are tricky things to buy, and you have to get them far enough ahead so that if they don't fit right around the neck you can change them. It is important that they fit right round the neck, because you'd hate to have Jo Rapusi, the Pollack who takes care of the shack, see you with a badly-fitting shirt. George buys half a dozen shirts and wears one the whole time he is away.

Eddie needs rubberboots. His old ones have no feet to them and can be used only as leggings. So we all have to go with Eddie while he tries on a new pair. We sit around in the bootery and watch him galumph up and down a strip of carpet, giving him advice on the various styles which the clerk brings out.

'How are these?' asks Eddie, a little proudly, stepping off

in a pair into which he has not quite got his right foot, with the result that he is thrown heavily to one side as it buckles under his weight.

'They're fine, Eddie,' we say, 'only watch out for that right one. It's got a nasty canter.'

'The fish will hear you coming in those, Eddie,' is another hot one. 'You ought to wear them on your hands.'

This sort of thing takes quite a time, because it has to be done well if you are doing it at all. There is just enough time left to go and see about the liquid bait which Mac is getting from the door-man at the club in three portable cases, and to sample it, and then it is almost midnight, and we are due to leave on the trip in four days.

These days are spent in making enemies among our friends by talking about what we are going to do.

'Well, you poor sons-of-guns can think of us a week from today, wading down the stream after a nice big baby with round blue eyes,' we say. 'And when we get him all nice and slit up and fried in butter, we'll stop and think of you before we eat him and maybe drink a silent toast to the goofs at home.'

'At's fine!' say our friends. And then they start a petition around among the other members of the club to have us locked up in the steam-room until August.

The day for the Big Departure comes around and Eddie finds that, at the last minute, he can't make the grade. He uses his new rubberboots to plant bay-trees in, one at each corner of his driveway. The rest of us get started, loaded down with rods and baskets, blankets and flasks, and seven knives to cut fish with (on reaching the camp next day, it is found that no one in the party has a knife).

There is a great deal of singing on the way up. The line-up consists of five tenors and one voice to carry the air. This gives a rich, fruity effect which necessitates each song's being

sung through twenty-five times, exclusive of the number of times we sing it after we have returned to town, to remind one another of what a good time we had singing it on the trip.

There is also considerable talk about what we are going to do with the extra fish. Roberts is going to send his home to his brother's family. They love fish. It turns out, oddly enough, that Mac's father (who lives in Wisconsin) also loves fish, and Mac is going to send his surplus to him. He has always sent his father fish, every Spring, and it seems to be the only thing that has kept the old man alive. Mac says that he has never known such a grand old man as his father, eighty-nine and reads the papers every Sunday, especially the funnies. If anyone takes the funnies out of the paper before his father gets them, he raises a terrible row. At this, Mac starts to cry slightly, just at the thought of his poor old father's having to go without his funnies, even for one Sunday.

Skinner, to whom Mac is confiding, also starts to cry a little, but he never lets on that it is at the thought of his own father, thirty years dead, that he is crying. Skinner is too much of a man for that. He lets Mac think that he is affected by the tragedy of Old Mr. Mac. This brings the two men together to a touching degree and they decide not to go on with the fishing trip at all, but to stop at the next town they go through and start in business together for themselves, and when they have made enough money they will have Mac's father come and live with them. The conversation ends in a disgusting fight between Mac and Skinner over the kind of business they are going into.

Once in a while someone catches a fish. I, personally, never have, but that is because once I get out in the open air I get so sleepy that I don't move off my cot, except to eat, from one day to the next.

ETHEREAL MILDNESS

Dorothy Parker

OH, I feel terrible. Rotten, I feel. I've got Spring Misery. I've got a mean attack of Crocus Urge. I bet you I'm running a temperature right at this moment; running it ragged. I ought to be in bed, that's where I ought to be. Not that it would do any good if I were. I can't sleep. I can't sleep for a damn. I can't sleep for sour apples. I can't sleep for you and who else.

I'm always this way in the Spring. Sunk in Springtime: or Take Away Those Violets. I hate the filthy season. Summer makes me drowsy, Autumn makes me sing, Winter's pretty lousy, but I hate Spring. They know how I feel. They know what Spring makes out of me. Just a Thing That Was Once a Woman, that's all I am in the Springtime. But do they do anything about it? Oh, no. Not they. Every year, back Spring comes, with the nasty little birds yapping their fool heads off, and the ground all mucked up with arbutus. Year after year after year. And me not able to sleep, on account of misery. All right, Spring. Go ahead and laugh your girlish laughter, you big sap. Funny, isn't it? People with melancholic insomnia are screams, aren't they? You just go on and laugh yourself simple. That's the girl!

It isn't as if I hadn't tried practically every way I ever heard of to induce sleep. I've taken long walks around the room in the midnight silence, and I've thought soothing thoughts, and I've recited long passages of poetry; I have even tried counting Van Dorens. But nothing works, drugs nor anything else. Not poppy nor mandragora. There was a book

called 'Not Poppy,' and now there's one called 'Not Magnolia,' and is it any wonder a person goes crazy? What with Spring and book-titles and loss of sleep, acute melancholia is the least I could have. I'm having a bad time. Oh, awful.

There has been but one sweet, misty interlude in my long stretch of white nights. That was the evening I fell into a dead dreamless slumber brought on by the reading of a book called 'Appendicitis.' (Well, picture my surprise when this turned out to be a book review, after all! You could have knocked me over with a girder.) 'Appendicitis' is the work of Thew Wright, A.B., M.D., F.A.C.S., who has embellished his pages with fascinatingly anatomical illustrations, and has remarked, in his dedication, that he endeavors through this book to bring an understanding of appendicitis to the laity. And it is really terribly hard to keep from remarking, after studying the pictures, 'That was no laity; that's my wife.' It is hard, but I'll do it if it kills me.

You might, and with good reasons, take for your favorite picture the 'Front View of Abdominal Cavity.' It is good, I admit; it has nice *nuances*, there is rhythm to the composition, and clever management is apparent in the shadows. But my feeling is that it is a bit sentimental, a little pretty-pretty, too obviously done with an eye toward popularity. It may well turn out to be another 'Whistler's Mother' or a 'Girl With Fan.' My own choice is the impression of 'Vertical Section of Peritoneum.' It has strength, simplicity, delicacy, pity, and irony. Perhaps, I grant you, my judgment is influenced by my sentiment for the subject. For who that has stood, bare-headed, and beheld the Peritoneum by moonlight can gaze unmoved upon its likeness?

The view of the Peritoneum induces waking dreams, but not slumber. For that I had to get into the text of the book. On his preface, Dr. Wright observes that 'The chapter on or pomy, while it may appear formidable, will, it is believed,

well repay the reader for his effort in reading it.' Ever anxious to be well repaid, I turned to the chapter. It did appear formidable; it appeared as formidable as all get-out. And when I saw that it started 'Let us divide the abdominal cavity into four parts by means of four imaginary lines,' I could only murmur, 'Ah, let's don't. Surely we can think up something better to play than that.'

From there, I went skipping about through the book, growing ever more blissfully weary. Only once did I sit up sharply, and dash sleep from my lids. That was at the section having to do with the love-life of poisonous bacteria. That, says the author, 'is very simple and consists merely of the bacterium dividing into two equal parts.' Think of it—no quarrels, no lies, no importunate telegrams, no unanswered letters. Just peace and sunshine and quiet evenings around the lamp. Probably bacteria sleep like logs. Why shouldn't they? What is Spring to them?

And, at the end of twenty-four hours, the happy couple—or the happy halves, if you'd rather—will have 16,772,216 children to comfort them in their old age. Who would not be proud to have 16,772,216 little heads clustered about his knee, who would not be soothed and safe to think of the young people carrying on the business after the old folks have passed on? I wish, I wish I were a poisonous bacterium. Yes, and I know right now where I'd go to bring up my family, too. I've got that all picked out. What a time I'd show *him*!

Barring the passages dealing with the life and times of bacteria, there is nothing in Dr. Wright's work to block repose. It is true that I never did find out whether I really had appendicitis—which is why I ever started the book, anyway—or whether it was just the effects of that new Scotch of mine which, friends tell me, must have been specially made by the Borgias. But 'Appendicitis' gave me a few blessed hours—y—forgetfulness, and for that I am almost cringingly grateful. book

Thew Wright, A.B., M.D., F.A.C.S. and all-around good fellow.

THE PLUMBER APPRECIATED

Ralph Bergengren

ONE MAY winter for years in a city apartment without meeting a plumber, but hardly without reading a good many humorous trifles about them in current literature; and my idea of this craftsman had been insidiously formed by the minor humorists. Summer, in my experience, had been a plumberless period, in which water flowed freely through the pipes of my house, and gushed obligingly from faucets at the touch of a finger. It was like an invisible brook; and, like a brook, I thought of it (if I thought of it at all) as going on forever. Nothing worse happened than a leak at the faucet. And when that happens I can fix it myself. All it needs is a new washer.

I run down cellar and turn off the water. I run up from the cellar and take off the faucet. I put in the new washer, which is like a very fat leather ring for a very thin finger, and screw on the faucet. I run down cellar, turn on the water, run up from the cellar, and look at the faucet. It still leaks. So I run down cellar, turn off the water, run up from the cellar, take off the faucet, make some slight alteration in the size, shape, or position of the washer, put on the faucet, run down cellar, turn on the water, run up from the cellar, and look at the faucet. If it *still* leaks (as is rather to be expected), I repeat as before; and if it *then* leaks (as is more than likely), I run down cellar, turn off the water, run up from the cellar, take off the faucet, make some slight alteration in the size, shape, or position of the washer, put on the faucet, run down cellar,

turn on the water, run up from the cellar, and look at the faucet. Perhaps it leaks more. Perhaps it leaks less. So I run down cellar—and turn off the water—and run up from the cellar—and take off the faucet. Then, talking aloud to myself, I take out the new washer, throw it on the floor, stamp on it, kick it out of the way, put in a newer washer, put on the faucet, run down cellar, turn on the water, run up from the cellar, and look at the faucet. If (and this may happen) it still *leaks*, I make queer, inarticulate, animal noises; but I run down cellar, turn off the water, run up from the cellar, and take off the faucet. Then I monkey a little with the washer (still making those queer animal noises), put on the faucet, run down cellar, turn on the water, run up from the cellar, and look at the faucet. *Sooner or later the faucet always stops leaking.* It is a mere matter of adjusting the washer; any handy man can do it with a little patience.

HERE WE GO ROUND REVOLVING DOORS

Corey Ford

ONE of the first problems which any Department Store must face is how to get its customers inside. If this problem were not carefully studied out and solved, the customers would have to buy their goods from the outside, and therefore it would be necessary to turn the store inside out, an engineering feat involving great expense and inconvenience, particularly in wet weather.

The first device to be adopted consisted of a crevice in the wall, called a Door. This *Door* was satisfactory enough when

the store had only one customer; but as business boomed and a second customer arrived, the problem of how to get both these customers through the same door became acute. They would halt outside together, wave their arms politely and motion for each other to go through. This pose would be held for exactly forty seconds, at which point they would both start forward simultaneously, collide, rebound, and then sweep up each other's glasses. After an hour's futile attempt, they would both give up, link arms and wander off together discouraged. Business began to fall off frightfully.

It was this difficulty that led, in 1887, to the invention of Revolving Doors; and I suppose I am the only person in the world who wasn't satisfied.

~~I am frank to confess~~ I don't like Revolving Doors. ^{Ignore} They rattle me. There is no hiding the fact, whenever I see a Revolving Door I get as nervous as a witch. I stand outside for a while and watch the compartments go by, filled with happy and carefree people, their arms laden with bundles, for all the world like Christmas Eve; and then I turn away sadly and start home again. It is no good. I simply can't screw my courage up to the sticking point. ^{Ignore}

Yesterday I had it out with myself in front of a Department Store. 'Stuff and nonsense, my good man,' I said to myself sternly, 'you're just giving in to your nerves, that's what's the matter with you. Why, look at all these people here going in and out of this Revolving Door all day long. You're as good as the next one, aren't you? Be a man. Jump into this Revolving Door,' I challenged myself, 'and go through with it.' ^{Ignore}

(I didn't really talk to myself like that. Maybe I *thought* those things to myself; but I certainly would have looked silly standing in front of a Revolving Door and muttering them out loud that way. I don't go making a show of myself, even for this article.)

So for several moments I waited patiently for the Revolving Door to slow down; and when there seemed no prospect of this, I gathered myself together, took a deep breath, lowered my head and charged into one of the fleeting openings, getting everything inside but my muffler and one elbow. My only problem now was to get out again.

For a little while I trotted around patiently and whistled to keep up my courage. Here, now; things weren't so bad. I was halfway through. As I grew more accustomed to the motion, I even began to look around a little; and I discovered, to my surprise, that my compartment was already partly filled by an elderly gentleman with a brief-case. He was staring at me with an air at once friendly, at once shy.

'How do you do?' he inquired politely.

'Fine,' I said cordially, 'and you?'

'Fine,' sighed the elderly gentleman; and we continued trotting around the door in silence for several minutes, while the fleeting opening sped by dizzily every so often.

'If I may make so bold as to inquire,' asked the elderly gentleman, 'when did you arrive?'

'Oh, I just got in,' I replied. 'I was on my way to buy some socks.'

'My name is Ronald Weech,' replied the elderly gentleman, extending his hand sympathetically, 'and I've been in here since last Thursday.'

'Well,' I said, taking a deep breath; and we shook hands solemnly.

'Have a sandwich?' asked Mr. Weech suddenly, opening his brief-case.

'No, thank you,' I nodded.

'If you don't mind,' apologized Mr. Weech; and he took out a ham sandwich, opened it and glanced inside. 'It's getting pretty near my lunch-time,' he explained, biting into it ravenously.

‘What’s been going on outside?’ asked Mr. Weech, as he munched his sandwich. ‘Any more strikes?’

I shook my head. ‘Millionaire marries a five-year-old girl,’ I said, ‘bandit-sheik sticks up a United Cigar Store, Coolidge comes out for economy, Pittsburgh loses, and they’re planning another flight over the Pole.’

‘I haven’t missed much,’ gulped Mr. Weech, swallowing his sandwich.

‘I should think you’d get pretty tired of just going around and around,’ I confessed, panting a little and increasing my speed as the Revolving Door crept up behind me and nipped my rubber.

‘To be perfectly frank,’ confessed the elderly gentleman, ‘it *does* grow just the least bit monotonous sometimes. Same old scenes, same old faces,’ he sighed wistfully, ‘same old grind over and over. There doesn’t seem to be any future in it.’ And for some time we trotted around glumly in silence.

‘You get used to it though,’ brightened Mr. Weech. ‘And it’s nice to see your old acquaintances now and then. For instance, I nod to the doorman there every so often,’ nodding to the doorman. ‘Yes, it might be worse. It might be an *escalator*, for instance,’ he smiled gravely.

‘Where are we now?’ I inquired after a pause, during which Mr. Weech amused himself by bracing his feet on the sides of the compartment and riding around for a while.

‘Well,’ said Mr. Weech, climbing down and taking out a small compass from his brief-case, ‘I should say we were just about . . . just about . . . sou’ sou’ east by east. . . .’

‘When we get due east,’ I decided, ‘I think I’ll make a break for it.’

‘I wish you could stick around for supper,’ said Mr. Weech. ‘I’ve got some bacon here in my brief-case, and we could build a little fire and heat some coffee. Sometimes,’ he confessed plaintively, ‘it gets pretty lonely here in this compartment all by myself.’

'Why don't you make the break with me, then?' I urged generously. 'Let's dash out together, what do you say?' and I gazed at Mr. Weech with eyes that sparkled with adventure.

'No,' sighed Mr. Weech, 'no, I haven't got the nerve, I guess. I just haven't got the nerve, that's all. No, you go right ahead and don't mind me. And I wish you all the luck in the world.'

'I hate to leave you all alone,' I hesitated.

'No, don't you think of that for one minute,' insisted Mr. Weech stoutly. 'Not for one solitary minute. It's awfully good of you, and generous, and all, but I wouldn't have you think of it for a minute. You're young, and ambitious, and full of the fire of youth; and I . . . ' he dropped his eyes sadly . . . 'I'm old, I guess, and settled, and in a rut. No, don't you hesitate for one single minute, boy.'

'Well . . . if you don't mind . . . ' I apologized. 'You see, I've got to buy those socks . . . '

'Good-bye, old man,' said Mr. Weech, shaking my hand warmly, his eyes welling with tears. 'It was darned good meeting up with you; and if you ever come through this way again you must be sure to stop in for lunch.'

'I will, oh, I will,' I promised. 'I'll make a definite point of it.'

'Don't forget,' said Mr. Weech. 'Second compartment to the left; you'll find me right here. And if by any chance you should ever happen to run into Mrs. Weech,' he added, 'will you please tell her I'm quite well, and send my love?'

'You bet,' I said; and then, watching my opportunity, I took another deep breath, bade Mr. Weech a last farewell, and leapt suddenly through the opening. And when I picked myself up, I discovered I was out on the street where I started from.

Anyway, you really don't need socks in hot weather.

MADDENED BY MYSTERY or, THE DEFECTIVE DETECTIVE

Stephen Leacock

THE Great Detective sat in his office. He wore a long green gown and half a dozen secret badges pinned to the outside of it.

Three or four pairs of false whiskers hung on a whisker-stand beside him.

Goggles, blue spectacles and motor glasses lay within easy reach.

He could completely disguise himself at a second's notice.

Half a bucket of cocaine and a dipper stood on a chair at his elbow.

His face was absolutely impenetrable.

A pile of cryptograms lay on the desk. The Great Detective hastily tore them open one after the other, solved them, and threw them down the cryptogram-chute at his side.

There was a rap at the door.

The Great Detective hurriedly wrapped himself in a pink domino, adjusted a pair of false black whiskers and cried, 'Come in.'

His secretary entered. 'Ha,' said the detective, 'it is you!'

He laid aside his disguise.

'Sir,' said the young man in intense excitement, 'a mystery has been committed!'

'Ha!' said the Great Detective, his eye kindling, 'is it such as to completely baffle the police of the entire continent?'

'They are so completely baffled with it,' said the secretary,

'that they are lying collapsed in heaps; many of them have committed suicide.'

'So,' said the detective, 'and is the mystery one that is absolutely unparalleled in the whole recorded annals of the London police?'

'It is.'

'And I suppose,' said the detective, 'that it involves names which you would scarcely dare to breathe, at least without first using some kind of atomizer or throat-gargle.'

'Exactly.'

'And it is connected, I presume, with the highest diplomatic consequences, so that if we fail to solve it England will be at war with the whole world in sixteen minutes?'

His secretary, still quivering with excitement, again answered yes.

'And finally,' said the Great Detective, 'I presume that it was committed in broad daylight, in some such place as the entrance of the Bank of England, or in the cloak-room of the House of Commons, and under the very eyes of the police?'

'Those,' said the secretary, 'are the very conditions of the mystery.'

'Good,' said the Great Detective, 'now wrap yourself in this disguise, put on these brown whiskers and tell me what it is.'

The secretary wrapped himself in a blue domino with lace insertions, then, bending over, he whispered in the ear of the Great Detective:

'The Prince of Wurttemberg has been kidnapped.'

The Great Detective bounded from his chair as if he had been kicked from below.

A prince stolen! Evidently a Bourbon! The scion of one of the oldest families in Europe kidnapped. Here was a mystery indeed worthy of his analytical brain.

His mind began to move like lightning.

'Stop!' he said, 'how do you know this?'

The secretary handed him a telegram. It was from the Prefect of Police of Paris. It read: 'The Prince of Wurttemberg stolen. Probably forwarded to London. Must have him here for the opening day of Exhibition. £1,000 reward.'

So! The Prince had been kidnapped out of Paris at the very time when his appearance at the International Exposition would have been a political event of the first magnitude.

With the Great Detective to think was to act, and to act was to think. Frequently he could do both together.

'Wire to Paris for a description of the Prince.'

The secretary bowed and left.

At the same moment there was a slight scratching at the door.

A visitor entered. He crawled stealthily on his hands and knees. A hearthrug thrown over his head and shoulders disguised his identity.

He crawled to the middle of the room.

Then he rose.

Great Heaven!

It was the Prime Minister of England.

'You!' said the detective.

'Me,' said the Prime Minister.

'You have come in regard to the kidnapping of the Prince of Wurttemberg?'

The Prime Minister started.

'How do you know?' he said.

The Great Detective smiled his inscrutable smile.

'Yes,' said the Prime Minister. 'I will use no concealment. I am interested, deeply interested. Find the Prince of Wurttemberg, get him safe back to Paris and I will add £500 to the reward already offered. But listen,' he said impressively as he left the room, 'see to it that no attempt is made to alter the marking of the Prince, or to clip his tail.'

So! To clip the Prince's tail! The brain of the Great Detective reeled. So! a gang of miscreants had conspired to—but no! the thing was not possible.

There was another rap at the door.

A second visitor was seen. He wormed his way in, lying almost prone upon his stomach, and wriggling across the floor. He was enveloped in a long purple cloak. He stood up, and peeped over the top of it.

Great Heaven!

It was the Archbishop of Canterbury!

'Your Grace!' exclaimed the detective in amazement—'pray do not stand, I beg you. Sit down, lie down, anything rather than stand.'

The Archbishop took off his mitre and laid it wearily on the whisker-stand.

'You are here in regard to the Prince of Wurttemberg.'

The Archbishop started and crossed himself. Was the man a magician?

'Yes,' he said, 'much depends on getting him back. But I have only come to say this: my sister is desirous of seeing you. She is coming here. She has been extremely indiscreet and her fortune hangs upon the Prince. Get him back to Paris or I fear she will be ruined.'

The Archbishop regained his mitre, uncrossed himself, wrapped his cloak about him, and crawled stealthily out on his hands and knees, purring like a cat.

The face of the Great Detective showed the profoundest sympathy. It ran up and down in furrows. 'So,' he muttered, 'the sister of the Archbishop, the Countess of Dashleigh!' Accustomed as he was to the life of the aristocracy, even the Great Detective felt that there was here intrigue of more than customary complexity.

There was a loud rapping at the door.

There entered the Countess of Dashleigh. She was all in furs.

She was the most beautiful woman in England. She strode imperiously into the room. She seized a chair imperiously and seated herself on it, imperial side up.

She took off her tiara of diamonds and put it on the tiara-holder beside her and uncoiled her boa of pearls and put it on the pearl-stand.

'You have come,' said the Great Detective, 'about the Prince of Wurttemberg.'

'Wretched little pup!' said the Countess of Dashleigh in disgust.

So! A further complication! Far from being in love with the Prince, the Countess denounced the young Bourbon as a pup!

'You are interested in him, I believe.'

'Interested!' said the Countess. 'I should rather say so. Why, I bred him!'

'You which?' gasped the Great Detective, his usually impassive features suffused with a carmine blush.

'I bred him,' said the Countess, 'and I've got £10,000 upon his chances, so no wonder I want him back in Paris. Only listen,' she said, 'if they've got hold of the Prince and cut his tail or spoiled the markings of his stomach, it would be far better to have him quietly put out of the way here.'

The Great Detective reeled and leaned up against the side of the room. So! The cold-blooded admission of the beautiful woman for the moment took away his breath! Herself the mother of the young Bourbon, misallied with one of the greatest families of Europe, staking her fortune on a Royalist plot, and yet with so instinctive a knowledge of European politics as to know that any removal of the hereditary birth-marks of the Prince would forfeit for him the sympathy of the French populace.

The Countess resumed her tiara.

She left.

The secretary re-entered.

'I have three telegrams from Paris,' he said, 'they are completely baffling.'

He handed over the first telegram.

It read:

'The Prince of Wurttemberg has a long, wet snout, broad ears, very long body, and short hind legs.'

The Great Detective looked puzzled.

He read the second telegram.

'The Prince of Wurttemberg is easily recognized by his deep bark.'

And then the third.

'The Prince of Wurttemberg can be recognized by the patch of white hair across the centre of his back.'

The two men looked at one another. The mystery was maddening, impenetrable.

The Great Detective spoke.

'Give me my domino,' he said. 'These clues must be followed up,' then pausing, while his quick brain analysed and summed up the evidence before him—'a young man,' he muttered, 'evidently young since described as a "pup," with a long, wet snout (ha! addicted obviously to drinking), a streak of white hair across his back (a first sign of the results of his abandoned life)—yes, yes,' he continued, 'with this clue I shall find him easily.'

The Great Detective rose.

He wrapped himself in a long black cloak with white whiskers and blue spectacles attached.

Completely disguised, he issued forth.

He began the search.

For four days he visited every corner of London.

He entered every saloon in the city. In some of them he

assumed the disguise of a sailor. In others he entered as a soldier. Into others he penetrated as a clergyman. His disguise was perfect. Nobody paid any attention to him as long as he had the price of a drink.

The search proved fruitless.

Two young men were arrested under suspicion of being the Prince, only to be released.

The identification was incomplete in each case.

One had a long wet snout, but no hair on his back.

The other had hair on his back, but couldn't bark.

Neither of them was the young Bourbon.

The Great Detective continued his search.

He stopped at nothing.

Secretly, after nightfall, he visited the home of the Prime Minister. He examined it from top to bottom. He measured all the doors and windows. He took up the flooring. He inspected the plumbing. He examined the furniture. He found nothing.

With equal secrecy he penetrated into the palace of the Archbishop. He examined it from top to bottom. Disguised as a choir-boy he took part in the offices of the church. He found nothing.

Still undismayed, the Great Detective made his way into the home of the Countess of Dashleigh. Disguised as a housemaid, he entered the service of the Countess.

Then at last the clue came which gave him a solution of the mystery.

On the wall of the Countess' boudoir was a large framed engraving.

It was a portrait.

Under it was a printed legend:

THE PRINCE OF WURTTENBERG

The portrait was that of a Dachshund.

The long body, the broad ears, the unclipped tail, the short hind legs—all was there.

In the fraction of a second the lightning mind of the Great Detective had penetrated the whole mystery

THE PRINCE WAS A DOG !!!!

Hastily throwing a domino over his housemaid's dress, he rushed to the street. He summoned a passing hansom, and in a few moments was at this house.

'I have it,' he gasped to his secretary, 'the mystery is solved. I have pieced it together. By sheer analysis I have reasoned it out. Listen—hind legs, hair on back, wet snout, pup—eh, what? does that suggest nothing to you?'

'Nothing,' said the secretary; 'it seems perfectly hopeless.'

The Great Detective, now recovered from his excitement, smiled faintly.

'It means simply this, my dear fellow. The Prince of Wurttemberg is a dog; a prize Dachshund. The Countess of Dashleigh bred him, and he is worth some £25,000 in addition to the prize of £10,000 offered at the Paris dog show. Can you wonder that—'

At that moment the Great Detective was interrupted by the scream of a woman.

'Great Heaven!'

The Countess of Dashleigh dashed into the room.

Her face was wild.

Her tiara was in disorder.

Her pearls were dripping all over the place.

She wrung her hands and moaned.

'They have cut his tail,' she gasped, 'and taken all the hair off his back. What can I do? I am undone!'

'Madame,' said the Great Detective, calm as bronze, 'do yourself up. I can save you yet.'

'You!'

'Me!'

'How?'

'Listen. This is how. The Prince was to have been shown at Paris.'

The Countess nodded.

'Your fortune was staked on him?'

The Countess nodded again.

'The dog was stolen, carried to London, his tail cut and his marks disfigured.'

Amazed at the quiet penetration of the Great Detective, the Countess kept on nodding and nodding.

'And you are ruined?'

'I am,' she gasped, and sank down on the floor in a heap of pearls.

'Madame,' said the Great Detective, 'all is not lost.'

He straightened himself up to his full height. A look of inflexible inflexity flickered over his features.

The honour of England, the fortune of the most beautiful woman in England was at stake.

'I will do it,' he murmured.

'Rise, dear lady,' he continued. 'Fear nothing. I WILL IMPERSONATE THE DOG!!!'

That night the Great Detective might have been seen on the deck of the Calais packet boat with his secretary. He was on his hands and knees in a long black cloak, and his secretary had him on a short chain.

He barked at the waves exultingly and licked the secretary's hand.

'What a beautiful dog,' said the passengers.

The disguise was absolutely complete.

The Great Detective had been coated over with mucilage to which dog hairs had been applied. The markings on his back were perfect. His tail, adjusted with an automatic coupler, moved up and down responsive to every thought. His deep eyes were full of intelligence.

Next day he was exhibited in the Dachshund class at the International show.

He won all hearts.

'*Quel beau chien!*' cried the French people.

'*Ach! was ein Dog!*' cried the Spanish.

The Great Detective took the first prize!

The fortune of the Countess was saved.

Unfortunately, as the Great Detective had neglected to pay the dog tax, he was caught and destroyed by the dog-catchers. But that is, of course, quite outside of the present narrative, and is only mentioned as an odd fact in conclusion.

IT'S ALL WRONG

Ogden Nash

(The office of Dr. Durfee, the eminent psychiatrist. Mr. Herkimer, a patient, has just entered. Dr. Durfee is somewhat taken aback at the sight of a male patient, but prepares to make the best of his plight.)

DR. DURFEE—Well, sir, what seems to be the trouble?

MR. HERKIMER—I get things mixed up.

DR. DURFEE—Come, come! That will never do.

MR. HERKIMER—That's what I say.

DR. DURFEE—We must look into this. What kind of things do you get mixed up?

MR. HERKIMER—Different things.

DR. DURFEE—Be more frank, please, if you want me to help you.

MR. HERKIMER—Well, mostly names.

DR. DUFFEE—Any particular kind of names? Names of ladies? Very embarrassing, ha ha!

MR. HERKIMER—Literary names. You know. Books. Authors. Heroes. Heroines.

DR. DUFFEE—Well, well. Are you a writer, Mr. Herkimer?

MR. HERKIMER—No. A reader.

DR. DUFFEE—You read?

MR. HERKIMER—Always. And I get mixed up.

DR. DUFFEE—Give me an example, please.

MR. HERKIMER—Well, it began with Jack the Giant-Killer.

DR. DUFFEE—Hmm, Jack the Giant-Killer.

MR. HERKIMER—I got him mixed up with Jack and the Beanstalk.

DR. DUFFEE—Because the names were similar, I daresay.

MR. HERKIMER—Sure you'd daresay. Coolidge would daresay that.

DR. DUFFEE—Never mind Coolidge. Continue, please.

MR. HERKIMER—Then there was Snow White and Rose Red. I got them mixed up, too. Mixed up with each other and with the Wars of the Roses. York, Snow White; Lancaster, Rose Red. Gee, Dr. Duffee, it was terrible.

DR. DUFFEE—How about Bluebeard and Blackbeard?

MR. HERKIMER—To this day I couldn't tell you which was which. And who wrote the Odyssey? Was it Homer, or James Joyce? I don't know.

DR. DUFFEE—You can't be much of a reader.

MR. HERKIMER—Sure I'm a reader, but I get mixed up. And why not? Look at Winston Churchill.

DR. DUFFEE—What about Winston Churchill?

MR. HERKIMER—There's two of him: that's what about him.

DR. DUFFEE—No, no, surely not two of him.

MR. HERKIMER—Yes sir: one, two. A novelist and a prime minister.

DR. DURFEE—Which is the novelist?

MR. HERKIMER—Winston Churchill.

DR. DURFEE—And the prime minister?

MR. HERKIMER—Winston Churchill.

DR. DURFEE—I fail to see your problem, Mr. Herkimer. If they're both Winston Churchill—

MR. HERKIMER—They're *not*! They're different Winston Churchills.

DR. DURFEE—A Winston Churchill is a Winston Churchill. (*He opens a book which is lying before him.*) See? Science says so.

MR. HERKIMER—Oh, if you want to start getting scientific—tracking me down like the Hound of the d'Urbervilles—

DR. DURFEE—You mean Tess of the Baskervilles—

MR. HERKIMER—You mean Lady Chatterley's Fan—

DR. DURFEE—You mean Lady Windermere's Lover—

MR. HERKIMER—You mean Sinclair Lewis—

DR. DURFEE—You mean Upton Sinclair—

MR. HERKIMER—You mean 'Æ'—

DR. DURFEE—You mean 'H. D.'—

MR. HERKIMER—You mean John Vassos—

DR. DURFEE—You mean John Doe Passos—

MR. HERKIMER—You mean Maxwell Anderson—

DR. DURFEE—You mean Sherwood Bodenheim—

MR. HERKIMER—You mean Zoë Gale—

DR. DURFEE—You mean Zona Akins—

MR. HERKIMER—You mean Miss Lulu Belle—

DR. DURFEE—You mean Lulu Bett—

MR. HERKIMER—You mean Wallace Irwin—

DR. DURFEE—You mean Will Irvin—

MR. HERKIMER—You mean Irvin S. Cobb—

DR. DURFEE—Shut up, you!

MR. HERKIMER—I will not shut up. You're a fine doctor. You're a credit to your profession. You're a real help, you

are! I'll bet you can't tell the Gibbsses apart. I'll bet you can't tell the Bensons apart. I'll bet you can't even tell the Powyses apart!

DR. DURFEE—Anyway, I can tell the Sitwells apart.

MR. HERKIMER—Yaah! now I *know* you're lying. Nobody can tell the Sitwells apart.

DR. DURFEE—Well, Mr. Herkimer, I guess the game's up. You've got me. What are you going to do about it?

MR. HERKIMER—You seem a decent sort of chap at heart, Dr. Durfee. Tell you what: I'll give you one chance. Do you know Ben Hecht?

DR. DURFEE—You mean Abou Ben Hecht—

MR. HERKIMER—(*seizing the telephone*)—Operance, Operance, I want an ambulator!

THE FUNNIEST MAN YOU EVER SAW

James Thurber

EVERYBODY seemed surprised that I had never met Jack Klohman.

Judas, I didn't know there was anybody who didn't know Jack Klohman,' said Mr. Potter, who was big and heavy, of body and mind. 'He's funnier'n hell.' Mr. Potter laughed and slapped his knee. 'He's the funniest man you ever saw.'

'He certainly is funny,' said somebody else.

'He's marvellous,' drawled a woman I didn't like. Looking around the group I discovered I didn't like any of them much, except Joe Mayer. This was undoubtedly unfair, for Joe was the only one I knew very well. The others had come over to the table where we were sitting. Somebody had mentioned Jack Klohman and everybody had begun to laugh.

'Do you know him, Joe?' I asked.

'I know him,' said Joe, without laughing.

'Judas,' went on Potter, 'I'll never forget one night at Jap Rudolph's. Klohman was marvellous that night. This was a couple years ago, when Ed Wynn was here in a new show—let's see, what the devil was it? Not "The Crazy Fool."'

'"The Perfect Fool,"' said somebody else.

'Yes. But it wasn't that,' said Potter. 'What the dickens was it? Well, never mind; anyway, there was a scene in it where——'

'Was it "Simple Simon"?' asked the blonde girl who was with Creel.

'No. It was a couple years before that,' said Potter.

'Oh, I know,' said the blonde girl. 'It was—now wait—it was "The Manhatters"!''

'Ed Wynn wasn't in that,' said Creel. 'Wynn wasn't in that show.'

'Well, it doesn't make much difference,' said Potter. 'Anyway, in this scene he has a line where——'

'"Manhattan Mary"!' cried Griswold.

'That's it!' said Potter, slapping his knee. 'Well, in this scene he comes on with a rope, kind of a lariat——'

'Halter,' said Griswold. 'It was a halter.'

'Yes, that's right,' said Potter. 'Anyway, he comes on with this halter——'

'Who comes on?' asked Joe Mayer. 'Klohman?'

'No, no,' said Potter. 'Wynn comes on with the halter and walks up to the footlights and some guy asks him what he's got the rope for, what he's doing with the halter. "Well," says Wynn, "I've either lost a horse or found a piece of rope——"'

'I think he said: "I've either found a piece of rope or lost a horse,"' said Griswold. 'Losing the horse coming last is funnier.'

'Well, anyway,' said Potter, 'Jack Klohman used to elaborate on the idea and this night at Jap Rudolph's I thought we'd all pass away.'

'I nearly did,' said Joe Mayer.

'What did this Klohman do?' I asked finally, cutting in on the general laughter.

'Well,' said Potter, 'he'd go out into the kitchen, see, and come in with a Uneeda biscuit and he'd say: "Look, I've either lost a biscuit box or found a cracker"—that's the right order, Gris—"I've either lost a biscuit box or lost"—I mean found—"a cracker."' "

'I guess you're right,' said Griswold.

'It sounds right,' said Joe Mayer.

'Then he'd do the same thing with everything he picked up, no matter what,' said Potter. 'Finally he went out of the room and was gone half an hour or so and then he comes down the stairs and holds up this faucet and says: "I've either lost a bathtub or found a faucet." He'd unscrewed a faucet from the bathtub and comes downstairs with this faucet—see what I mean? Laugh? I thought I'd pass away.'

Everybody who had been at Jap Rudolph's that night roared with laughter.

'But that wasn't anything,' said Potter. 'Wait'll you hear. Along about two in the morning he slips out again, see?—all the way out of the house this time. Well, I'll be doggoned if that guy didn't come back carrying part of an honest-to-God chancel rail! He did! I'm telling you! Son-of-a-gun had actually got into a church somehow and wrenched part of this chancel rail loose and there he was standing in the door and he says: "I've either lost a church or found a chancel rail." It was rich. It was the richest I ever saw. Helen Rudolph had gone to bed, I remember—she wasn't very well—but we got her up and he did it again. It was rich.'

'Sounds like a swell guy to have around,' I said.

'You'd darn near pass away,' said Potter.

'You really would,' said Joe Mayer.

'He's got a new gag now,' said one of the women. 'He's got a new gag that's as funny as the dickens. He keeps taking things out of his pockets or off of a table or something and says that he's just invented them. He always takes something that's been invented for *years*, say like a lead pencil or something, and goes into this long story about how he thought it up one night. I remember he did it with about twenty different things one night at Jap's——'

'Jap Rudolph's?' I asked.

'Yes,' said the woman. 'He likes to drop in on them, so you can usually find him there, so we usually drop in on them too. Well, this night he took out a package of those Life Savers and handed us each one of the mints and——'

'Oh, yes, I remember that!' said Potter, slapping his knee and guffawing.

'Gave us each one of these mints,' went on the woman, 'and asked us what we thought of them—asked us whether we thought they'd go or not. "It's a little thing I thought up one day," he said. Then he'd go on with a long rigmarole about how he happened to think of the idea, and——'

'And then he'd take a pencil out of his pocket,' cut in Potter, 'and ask you what you thought of the eraser on the end of it. "Just a little gadget I thought up the other night," he'd say. Then he says he'll show you what it's for, so he makes everybody take a piece of paper and he says: "Now everybody make some pencil marks on the paper; any kind—I won't look," so then he goes into another room and says to let him know when you're ready. So we all make marks on the pieces of paper and somebody goes and gets him out of the other room——'

'They always go and get him out of the other room,' Joe Mayer said to me.

'Sure,' said Potter. 'So he comes out with his sleeves rolled up, like a magician, and——'

'But the *funniest* thing he does,' began the woman whom Potter had interrupted.

'And he gathers up the papers and erases the marks with the eraser and he says: "Oh, it's just a novelty; I'm not going to try to market it." Laugh? I thought I'd pass away. Of course you really ought to see him do it; the way he does it is a big part of it—solemn and all; he's always solemn, always acts solemn about it.'

'The *funniest* thing he does,' began the interrupted woman again, loudly, 'is fake card tricks. He——'

'Oh, yes!' cried Potter, roaring and slapping his knee. 'He does these fake card tricks. He——' Here the recollection of the funny man's antics proved too much for Potter and he laughed until he cried. It was several minutes before he could control himself. 'He'll take a pack of cards,' he finally began again. 'He'll take a pack of cards——' Once more the image of Klohman taking a pack of cards was too much for the narrator and he went off into further gales of laughter. 'He'll take this pack of cards,' Potter eventually said once more, wiping his eyes, 'and ask you to take any card and you take one and then he says: "Put it anywhere in the deck," and you do and then he makes a lot of passes and so on——'

'Like a magician,' said Joe Mayer.

'Yes,' said Potter. 'And then he draws out the wrong card, or maybe he *looks* at your card first and then goes through the whole deck till he finds it and shows it to you or——'

'Sometimes he just lays the pack down and acts as if he'd never started any trick,' said Griswold.

'Does he do imitations?' I asked. Joe Mayer kicked my shins under the table.

'Does he do *imitations*?' bellowed Potter. 'Wait'll I tell you——'

ANOTHER UNCLE EDITH CHRISTMAS STORY

Robert Benchley

UNCLE EDITH said: 'I think it is about time that I told you a good old-fashioned Christmas story about the raging sea.'

'Aw, nuts!' said little Philip.

'As you will,' said Uncle Edith, 'but I shall tell it just the same. I am not to be intimidated by a three-year-old child. Where was I?'

'You were over backwards, with your feet in the air, if I know anything about you,' said Marian, who had golden hair and wore it in an unbecoming orange ribbon.

'I guess that you probably are right,' said Uncle Edith, 'although who am I to say? Anyway, I *do* know that we sailed from Nahant on the fourteenth March.'

'What are you—French?' asked little Philip, 'the fourteenth March.'

'The fourteenth *of* March, then,' said Uncle Edith, 'and if you don't shut up I will keep right on with the story. You can't intimidate me.'

'Done and done,' said little Philip, who bled quite a lot from a wound in his head inflicted a few seconds before by Uncle Edith.

'We set sail from Nahant on the fourteenth *of* March (nya-a-a-a-a) on the good ship Patience W. Littbaum, with a cargo of old thread and bound for Algeciras.'

'End of story!' announced Marian in a throaty baritone.

'It is *not* the end of the story, and I will sue anyone who

says that it is,' petulated Uncle Edith. 'You will know well enough when I come to the end of the story, because I shall fall over on my face. Now be quiet or Uncle Edith will give you a great big abrasion on the forehead.'

'I can hardly wait,' said little Philip, or whichever the hell one of those children it was, I can't keep them all straight, they are all so much alike.

'Aboard,' continued Uncle Edith, 'aboard were myself, as skipper——'

'Skippered herring' (*a whisper*).

'—Lars Jannssenn, first mate; Max Schnirr, second mate; Enoch Olds, third base; and a crew of seven whose names you wouldn't recognize. However, there we were.

'The first 709 days were uneventful. The sailmaker (a man by the name of Sailmaker, oddly enough) made eleven sails, but, as we had no more ships to put them on, and as our sails were O.K., we had to throw them overboard. This made the men discontented, and there were rumors of mutiny. I sent a reporter up to see the men, however, and the rumors were unconfirmed; so I killed the story. NO MUTINY was the head I put on it in the ship's paper that night, and everybody was satisfied.'

'You great big wonderful animal,' said Marian, running her tiny hand through Uncle Edith's hair.

'It was nothing,' said Uncle Edith, and everybody agreed that it certainly was.

'However,' continued the old salt pork, 'everyone on board felt that something was wrong. We were at that time at Lat. seventy-eight, Long. seventy-eight, which cancelled each other, making us right back where we started from——'

'Don't tell me that we are back at Nahant again,' said little Philip, throwing up.

'Not exactly Nahant,' said Uncle Edith, 'but within hailing distance of a Nahanted ship.'

'You just used Nahant in the first place so that you could pull that gag,' said Primrose, who, up to this time, had taken no part in the conversation, not having been born.

'So help me God,' said Uncle Edith, 'it came to me like *that!*' And he snapped a finger, breaking it. 'The ha'nted ship lay just off our starboard bow, and seemed to be manned by mosquitoes. As we drew alongside, however, we found that there was not a soul on board. Not a soul on board.'

'That is the second time you have said that,' said little whatever-his-name-is—Philip.

Uncle Edith made no reply other than to throw nasty little Philip into irons.

'"Prepare to board!" was the order given. And everybody, ignoring the chance for a pun, prepared to board the derelict. In a few seconds we were swarming over the side of the empty ship and searching every nook and cranny of her. The search, however, was fruitless. The ship's log was found in the wheelhouse, but, as the last entry read, "Fair and warm. Billy said he didn't love me as much as he does Anna" we discarded that as evidence. In the galley we found a fried egg, done on only one side, and an old bo'sun who was no good to anybody. Other than these two things, the mystery was complete.'

'Not that I give a damn,' said Marian, 'but what was the explanation to this almost complete mystery?'

'If you will shut your trap,' said Uncle Edith, 'I will tell you. As I may not have told you, the mystery ship was full of sleeping Hessian troops, such as were used against the colonists in the Revolutionary War. They were very gay in their red coats and powdered wigs, and, had they been awake might have offered some solution of the problem which now presented itself to us.'

'"What shall I do, cap'n?" asked Lars Jannssenn, who had been promoted to purser.

"What would you like to do, Lars?" I asked him.

"Me, I would like to have three wishes," was the typically Scandinavian reply. (Lars had belonged to the Scandi-navy before he joined up with us.)

"They are yours," I said, more on the spur of the moment than anything else. "You take your three wishes and put them in your hat and pull it down over your ears. Anybody else?"

"Suddenly there was a scream from below decks. I have heard screams in my day, but never anything like this one. It was dark by now, and there were a lot of couples necking in the lifeboats. But this scream was different. It was like nothing human. It came from the bowels of the ship, and you know that's bad.

"All hands below!" I cried, and just as everybody was rushing down the hatchways there came a great explosion, seemingly from the jib.

"All hands to the jib!" I cried in my excitement.

"What is all this—a game?" asked the crew, as one man.

"I am captain here," I said, boxing the compass roundly, "and what I say goes! In the future please try to remember that fact."

"Well, this sort of thing went on for hours. Up and down the ship we went, throwing overboard Hessians in our rush, until finally the cook came to me and said: "Cap'n, I frankly am sick of this. Are there, or are there not, any reasons why we should be behaving like a pack of schoolboys?"

"This was a poser. I called the crew together and we decided to go back to the *Patience W. Littbaum*. But, on looking over the side, we found a very suspicious circumstance. *The Patience W. Littbaum was gone!*

"I don't believe it!" said little Philip, from the brig.

Uncle Edith turned sharply. "I thought you were in irons," he said.

'You think a lot,' replied little Philip, and the entire casino burst into a gale of laughter, although it was a pretty lousy come-back, even for a three-year-old.

'Very well, then,' said Uncle Edith. 'I am sorry if you feel that way. For I was just going to end the story by saying that we sailed the mystery ship back to Nahant.'

'And where does Christmas come in?' piped up Marian, who hadn't heard a word of Uncle Edith's story.

'Who the hell said anything about Christmas?' asked Uncle Edith in a rage.

And who the hell did?

THE SINKING OF THE KAWA¹

Corey Ford

SAN FRANCISCO in 1839! A tangled mass of shipping in the harbor, tugs, ferries, and scurrying yachts, here and there a canoe filled with Indians trading wampum; before the log cabins on the hill a platoon of soldiers already drilling for the Civil War; and tied up to the quaint pier, her blue flag flying and her crew of hardy adventurers staring all unknowing for the last time at this scene of bustling activity, the ill-fated Kawa stood ready to embark upon what was to prove her final voyage.

Whistles were blowing, sirens shrieking, somewhere a steward's gong rang faintly and a bugle sounded its warning note. The crowd of friends on the dock waved their hats aloft in tearful farewell to the intrepid explorers, bound for none

¹From *Salt Water Taffy, the Almost Incredible Autobiography of Captain Ezra Triplett's Seafaring Daughter, June Triplett.*

knew how long, alas! amongst the savage cannibals of the South Seas. 'So long, Swank!' they called. 'A good trip to you, Whinney!' and 'Farewell, Dr. Walter H. Traprock! Farewell to you!' came from the choking throats of the weeping relatives on the pier. My father stood beside the taffrail, staring at his watch. At precisely three minutes to three, always an ominous moment in the lives of sailor-folk, he nodded his head gravely, and the excited crew ran up the sails, ran down again sheepishly and stood on the deck instead, while the magnificent white wings of the doomed ship spread themselves slowly to the wind. The band of forty pieces struck up 'Valencia,' and Mother forced a tearful smile. A deadly foreboding that seems instinctive with the women-folk of deep sea sailors had come upon her.

'They're off!' shouted the crowd on the dock. 'Remember me to the South Seas, Herman! Reginald, don't forget to write! Oh, *Wal-ter*! Goodby! Goodby!'

'Goodby!' shouted the adventurers, a suspicious catch in their voices.

'Goodby!' shouted the crowd on the shore again.

The Kawa's sails billowed and filled. Father grasped the wheel in anticipation. Mother swayed and fell to the pier in a dead faint.

'Goodby!' shouted the crowd on the dock once more.

'Goodby! Goodby!' cried Dr. Traprock, trying to smile.

'Goodby!' replied the crowd again; and for five or ten minutes they continued to wave hats and flags and shout 'Goodby!' now and then casting surreptitious glances at their watches. At the end of half an hour the band stopped playing 'Valencia,' and Mother came out of her faint and began to wave her handkerchief again.

'Well, we're off,' shouted Swank, to fill the embarrassing silence.

'Yeh?' replied the crowd a little suspiciously.

'Why don't you start, then?' demanded a voice in the rear.

'Why *don't* we start?' Dr. Traprock whispered uneasily to Father.

Father only shook his head. For once he was baffled. The wind was with them, all the passengers were aboard, they had their clearance papers. In the meantime the crowd on the pier was thinning out perceptibly. The band had packed its forty pieces and walked over to a nearby trolley-car. Mother had fainted again, from sheer weariness. Poor Whinney tried to brighten the rapidly increasing gloom by tossing a roll of colored streamer to a friend on the dock. It missed the edge of the pier by several feet and sank limply into the water, where it slowly disappeared. The friend retaliated by tossing another roll of colored streamer at the ship, which failed to unroll in its flight and struck Swank smartly in the eye. There was an exchange of dirty looks.

'Ah, let's give her a push,' someone in the crowd laughed sourly.

'Well, why don't you go home?' demanded Whinney. 'You don't have to wait if you don't want to.'

'You're darned tootin' we don't,' the crowd replied, as they turned and walked away in disagreeable silence.

'I hope you *stay* home,' called Swank.

'I hope you stay in the South Sea,' retorted the last of the crowd over their shoulders. The hardy adventurers stared bitterly at the deserted pier. Father bit his lip in defeat. Dr. Traprock wandered disconsolately toward the stern.

'Captain,' he called presently, 'I've just been wondering if it would help to untie the Kawa from the dock?'

'Well, I'll be a son-of-a-gun,' laughed Father, hurrying aft to cast off the hawser; and in less time than it takes to tell the Kawa had left the empty dock and sailed into the moonlight on her last fatal voyage, accompanied by a few scattered jeers from the shore; and if anybody had told the hardy ad-

venturers then that they would never see the faces of their loved ones again, that would have seemed too soon.

This ominous departure was but the first of a series of ill omens that befell the Kawa on her trip south. While passing through the Golden Gate she filled with water and sank. This incident might have passed unnoticed, had she not sunk twice more during the short run to New Guinea. Whenever a ship sinks three times in a voyage, it is generally accepted as a sure indication of trouble among those who go down to the sea; and when the Kawa sank a fourth time, on her way out of the harbor of Sydney, Father's anxiety increased. Folk laugh at the superstitions of sailormen, but few who have lived at sea will dispute their justification.

That night the mast broke into three pieces and fell to the deck. Father surveyed the wreckage and shook his head gloomily.

'It's a bad sign, sir,' he confided to Dr. Traprock, who stood beside him with a long face. 'A mighty bad sign. Among us seafarin' men, it's a sure omen of trouble. In my humble opinion, sir, somebody has brung a curse onto this here ship.'

At that moment Traprock grasped Father's arm and pointed in horrified silence. A single file of rats approached the rail, poised, and dived overboard one by one. Father nodded his head significantly.

Two days later the Kawa lost her rudder. Father's and Traprock's glances met.

'I wouldn't go to mention no names, sir,' said Father, and he let his gaze rest for a moment on Herman Swank, asleep on the afterdeck, 'but I'm beginnin' to think there's a Jonah aboard.'

'Do you mean—Swank?' whispered Traprock hoarsely.

Father nodded ominously. Traprock whisked a tear from his eye.

'For the good of the ship,' warned Father.

'For the good of the ship,' Traprock agreed, clasping Father's hand soberly as he seized a marlinspike and tiptoed aft in silence.

The following morning Father discovered that the entire crew had died during the night of scurvy. Traprock stared at him in bewilderment.

'Then it wasn't Swank, after all?' he asked.

Father shook his head.

'But who——?'

By way of answer Father put his finger silently to his lip. Traprock turned slowly and looked where he pointed. Reginald Whinney was leaning far out over the rail, wrapped up in his observations of a group of sea-gardenias that were tangled in the stern.

'For the good of the ship,' breathed Father.

Dr. Traprock grasped Father's hand again, and with tears streaming down his cheeks he started cautiously toward the unsuspecting figure beside the rail.

And that very afternoon the ship sank once more.

Dr. Traprock was sitting moodily on the afterdeck when Father walked slowly toward him bearing the news. He read at a glance the message in Father's eye. With his chin thrust forward proudly he grasped Father's hand in his own, and they shook silently. Father's own cheeks were suspiciously wet.

'Traprock, I'm sorry,' he said. 'I'm *damned* sorry. I wouldn't have had this happen for worlds. You and I've sailed together many's the long year, and I had hoped we'd sail together many years more. But as I see it, there's only one course left. Maybe,' he added with an apologetic laugh, 'you think I'm just a superstitious old woman.'

'No, not at all,' Dr. Traprock assured him heartily. 'I think you're perfectly right. I have the utmost respect for the traditions of the sea, and I do not blame you in the slightest. It is the only course left.'

'Thank you, Traprock,' said Father.

'Just tell them,' said Dr. Traprock, removing his coat and poising a moment on the rail, 'just tell them it was for the good of the ship.'

For the next three days Father sailed the sea alone on the deserted Kawa, staring moodily at the horizon and recalling the happy times when the boat had rung with laughter and song. On the third day he turned in as usual, shortly before nine o'clock. His first indication of trouble was when the water in his cabin had risen to the level of his bunk. That night the Kawa sank again badly.

Father was a man of iron will, and once his duty was clear he did not shirk. Stopping only to spread a couple of pimento cheese sandwiches and thrust them into his hip pocket, along with his keys, wallet, and a small American flag, he mounted to the rail and turned for a last look at the Kawa, whereon he had spent so many happy years. Slowly he turned again and faced the limitless expanse of ocean that stretched on all sides.

'Curse you,' he breathed. 'Oh, curse the sea and all its superstitions!'

He tightened his belt.

'For the good of the ship,' he murmured, and holding his nose, he jumped.

How long he was in the water, tossed and buffeted by the relentless waves, he has no idea. It may have been days and it may have been weeks. In the course of time he mercifully lost consciousness. When he opened his eyes again, he was lying inert upon a wide and sandy shore, lined with coconut trees and chattering monkeys.

Father's first act upon staggering to his feet, weak as he was, was to plant his water-soaked American flag in the sand and name his discovery Staten Island after his aunt, a Miss Florence Staten. The problem of food was not so easily

solved. In vain Father wandered up and down the hard-packed beach, searching for something to eat. At length he sank down exhausted on the sand, facing the sea.

'Curse you,' he sighed.

Even as he spoke a huge breaker rolled up the sand toward him, bearing a wooden box packed with provisions and ship's stores, and then receded silently, leaving the food scattered on the beach.

'Up to its old devil tricks,' muttered Father suspiciously.

He had no sooner spoken than a second wave rolled up the beach carrying a small table and a full set of dishes, rapidly set places for two, and handed Father a menu in French as it disappeared down the sand.

'I don't trust it, I don't,' Father muttered to himself, as a third wave dashed up the beach apologetically with some butter which the second wave apparently had forgotten; and all through his meal he continued to shake his head and mutter dubiously. His suspicions were justified. No sooner had he pushed back his plate than a fourth wave approached reluctantly, and when it receded it left a small slip of paper upside down on a little silver tray. Father seized the slip and scanned it hurriedly.

'Just as I thought,' he groaned. 'Oh, curse the sea! Curse it!'

Nor were his troubles yet over. His suspicions that the island was not deserted had been aroused when he noted that the table on the beach had been set for two. The choice between a deserted island and a cannibal island is so small that Father did not know whether to be surprised or sorry when a heavy grunt behind him awoke him from his reverie, and he whirled about to find himself surrounded by a group of naked savages, who stood with folded arms and surveyed him with evident relish.

Father knew at a glance that he was 'in for it.' As he

nodded cordially to his captors, a greeting which was returned very frigidly, a large cannibal in war-paint and feathers strode slowly to the center of the group and motioned Father to sit down beside him. The Negroes formed a large semicircle behind these two figures, and slowly began to rock right and left, crooning a song that Father recognized as one of the hits from 'Show Boat.' At the conclusion of this song the Cannibal King began to applaud violently, and Father did the same. For an encore the two men at the end of the circle rose with tambourines and did a clever softshoe dance.

'Well, Mistah Interlockutah,' said the Cannibal King, turning to Father, 'dis am a great day fo' de race, sho' nuff!'

'So this is a great day for the race, eh,' repeated Father promptly, recalling his last entertainment at the Elks' smoker. 'Well, Mr. Johnson, maybe you'll tell us now what race is this a great day for?'

'Fo' de colored race,' replied 'Mr. Johnson,' baring his white teeth in a grin and bowing to several imaginary friends in the audience, while the house rocked with applause and a double quartette rendered 'Old Black Joe' with much feeling, and they were forced to raise and lower the curtain again and again for seven or eight encores.

'You were swell,' said Father, turning to the King after the performance.

'Do you think so?' smiled the King modestly.

'*Think* so? Why, I *know* so,' said Father, noting two or three natives lighting a fire under a huge copper cauldron. 'You've got a natural gift for comedy. Why, you'd leave Moran and Mack way back in the shade.'

'Oh, you're just saying that,' said the King; but it was plain to see that he was pleased, nevertheless.

'I'm *not* saying it,' Father continued with mounting enthusiasm, as the cauldron commenced to bubble slightly. 'Why, you'd get over in New York like a million dollars.'

'They'd eat you up,' and he glanced nervously at the cauldron.

'It's my ambition to go to New York,' confessed the King dreamily.

'It's *my* ambition, too,' said Father desperately, as the cook commenced to stir the pot and glance toward him tentatively. 'Whadye say, King, maybe we two could go together.'

'Oh, I haven't got a *thing* to wear,' sighed the King, glancing down at himself.

'I can lend you plenty,' urged Father, wiping the perspiration from his forehead. 'You don't need much, just a change or two—and evenings—'

'I'll do it,' decided the King suddenly.

As Father breathed a sigh of relief, a new terror assailed him.

'How will we get there?' he asked. 'We haven't got a boat.'

'We don't need a boat,' said the King quietly.

Father looked at him in surprise.

'This is a floating island,' he replied with a smile; and he rocked back and forth once or twice on the beach, and the line of palms behind him was seen to rise and fall slightly. So the eager natives all seized paddles, and at a signal from their leader they dipped them into the water and paddled north, arriving in New York after three weeks and leaving their island just inside the entrance to the harbor, where indeed it may be found today if any proof is needed of this story, and Father gave the King a letter of introduction to Mr. Ziegfeld, who was so carried away by his natural skill and dancing ability that he put him under contract at once to star in several shows, in which he made a tremendous name for himself as a comedian and published his autobiography in the 'Saturday Evening Post'; and that in fact, is the true story of how Al Jolson got his start.

At least, that is the way that Father told it to me.

THE MAN WHO LOOKED LIKE WASHINGTON

Wolcott Gibbs

I WAS LYING on the sofa the other evening, wondering what we were all coming to, when the door opened and in walked my friend, Mr. Mullin. He had on a polo coat and a golf cap, but underneath you could see that he was completely dressed in Colonial costume. In the past, and certainly in less exotic plumage, Mr. Mullin had made deliveries for the cordial shop on the corner, and our relations had been genial, if sporadic.

'Well!' I said, 'what's happened to you?'

Wearily, Mr. Mullin told me what had happened to him. It seemed that, ever since the Bicentennial celebration began, he had been employed by Congressman Bloom, and, for varying considerations, had impersonated the Father of His Country more times than he cared to remember. It had never struck me that Mr. Mullin bore any especial resemblance to George Washington, but now, looking at him, I was astonished. There was something raffish and disreputable in his eye; otherwise he might easily have sat for one of Stuart's portraits.

'I just dropped in to see how you was making out,' he said. 'I can only stay a minute. It's seven-thirty now, and I got to beat it up to Albany at eight. There's some dame up there, and I got to sleep in her bed.'

'You've got to what?' I asked.

'I got to sleep in her bed,' he said, and then, noticing my bewilderment, he grinned. 'Hell,' he said, 'she's older than

God. It's just one of them beds Washington slept in. That's one of Bloom's ideas. Some monkey wrote in and gave him a list of all the beds Washington slept in, and now it seems I got to go around and do it again. Three hundred and *eighty-five*. I been in about half of 'em so far.'

There was a reminiscent distaste in his voice.

'You ought to see them beds,' he said. 'Most of them got kind of a cover over the top, like a tent, and either they're so hard you'd sooner lay on the floor, or else it's feathers and you like to smother. Usually they got some kind of sign on 'em, like "President Washington occupied this bed on September 8th, 1789." "Occupied" is right,' I told Bloom. "You can lay dough he didn't *sleep* in none of them beds, except he had the sleeping sickness."

'Irregardless of how lousy the beds are, you couldn't sleep anyway with all the nutty stuff they pull on you. I said to Bloom, I asked him what difference is it if I got pajamas on, seeing I'm covered up with the sheets and all, but he says no, pajamas ain't authentic, so they give me this now night-shirt and some damn kind of a hat like Sandy Claus. Geez, if the hat ain't coming down over my face, I got the night-shirt up around my neck and the rest of me nakid. After a while I got so's I'd pin it together at the bottom, but even so it ain't so hot.

'Then they got this like a frying pan they put in your bed. They fill it up with coal out of the stove, and then the maid comes around and puts it in between the sheets. I figure the idea is they didn't have very good heat in them days, so they had to warm up the bed before anybody got into it. The first couple of times they done it I thought I'd dropped the ashes off my cigarette and set the bed on fire. Then there was the time up in New Haven when the maid don't know no more about bed-warmers than I do, and she goes away and leaves the damn thing, so when I get in bed I lay right on top of it.

Did I holler! I told Bloom afterwards, I said a man ain't going to let nobody set fire to him for a lousy ten bucks. That's what they give me for sleeping in each of these beds. A lousy ten bucks.'

Mr. Mullin sighed and then, unexpectedly, sneezed.

'You've got a cold,' I said.

'You said it,' he replied gloomily. 'I've had it ever since Christmas, when they got these boys to row me across the Delaware River in a rowboat. You know,' he said, 'sometimes I figure this Bloom don't have good sense. You take this rowing over the Delaware River. When Bloom told me about it, I said O.K., particularly since there was a sawbuck in it for me, but I asked him why don't we wait for the warm weather. "That ain't when it happened," he says. "Well, 1931 ain't when it happened either," I told him. "If you're more than a hundred and fifty years off anyways," I said, "what difference is a couple months going to make?" But he says no, we got to be accurate, so along in December me and these eleven boys get ready to row across the Delaware River in a rowboat. Just a regular rowboat it was, like the ones they got in Central Park—made to hold two, maybe three, people. Well, there was *twelve* of us, me sitting in the middle, wondering would she tip over before we could get started.

'The other eleven boys had kind of poles. I told Bloom that one guy with oars, and using the rowlocks, would of been better, but he had some kind of painting showing these eleven guys with poles, so we had to do it that way.

'Well, we was just shoving off when Bloom hollers to me. "Mullin," he says, "you got to stand up," "I got to *what*?" I asked him. "You got to stand up like here in the picture." "Listen, Mr. Bloom," I said, "you ain't got good sense or you'd know nobody but a dope stands up in a rowboat." He don't pay any attention to me. "Either you stand up like in the picture," he says, "or you don't get a dime."

'Well, we argued back and forth for a while. He says George Washington done it so it must be right, and I told him one of these now saints *walked* on the water but that don't make it right for me. Anyway, he keeps holding out on the dough so finally I stand up and we get to going. I get the goose pimples every time I think about it.'

'You got over all right, though?' I asked.

'Yeah,' he said, 'we got over. Later on one of the boys got pneumonia and kicked off, but all *I* got was this cold.'

He sneezed again.

'Puts me in mind of Valley Forge,' he said. '*That* was something. Colder than hell, and he makes us take off our shoes and wrap kind of old sacks around our feet. It's a wonder I ain't dead.'

'It's a tough racket,' I said sympathetically.

'You said it, Jack.' His wandering and rebellious eye fell on the clock across the room, and he started. 'Seven forty-five! Geez, Jack, I got to get going!'

He turned toward the door.

'Let me see you again when you come back,' I said. 'How about tomorrow?'

'I can't do it, Jack,' he said. 'I tell you what I got on this week. Monday and Tuesday I got to sleep in two more of these beds, some place way up in Vermont. Wednesday I say farewell to my troops down at the Battery, and then march up to City Hall and meet Walker. Thursday I got to be inaugurated down in Washington—that's when I introduce Hoover over the raddio. Friday is the Cornwallis surrender in Yorktown. You know something comical about that, Jack? This guy they got to be Cornwallis is little Hymie Rosenthal, used to be up at P.S. 145 when I was there. Ain't that something? Ha. Well, anyways, then Saturday and Sunday I got to work for the Movietone people some place out

on Long Island. It seems there was this big battle there once. Altogether I ain't got a minute.'

'How about next week?' I asked.

His face brightened.

'That's an idea,' he said. 'I tell you what. Next Monday I'm moving into this copy of Mount Vernon they been building over in Flatbush. I'll be there a week. First couple of days, Bloom and them are putting on a big show—kind of like a houseparty except everybody is in costume—but after that I'm free. Why don't you come over, say along about Wednesday night?'

'Fine,' I said. 'I'll do that.'

I expected him to go out then, but he didn't. He stood with his hand on the doorknob and looked at me doubtfully.

'Look,' he said, 'if you got a dame, it's O.K. to bring her along.'

'Thanks.'

'And listen,' he said, 'if she's got a friend, that's O.K. too.'

'O.K.,' I said.

'Well, I'll be seeing you, boy,' said George Washington hastily, and he went out.

DEATH OF RED PERIL

Walter D. Edmonds

I

JOHN BROUGHT his off eye to bear on me:

What do them old coots down to the store do? Why, one of 'em will think up a horse that's been dead forty year and then they'll set around remembering this and that about that horse until they've made a resurrection of him. You'd think

he was a regular Grattan Bars, the way they talk, telling one thing and another, when a man knows if that horse hadn't've had a breeching to keep his tail end off the ground he could hardly have walked from here to Boonville.

A horse race is a handsome thing to watch if a man has his money on a sure proposition. My pa was always a great hand at a horse race. But when he took to a boat and my mother he didn't have no more time for it. So he got interested in another sport.

Did you ever hear of racing caterpillars? No? Well, it used to be a great thing on the canawl. My pa used to have a lot of them insects on hand every fall, and the way he could get them to run would make a man have his eyes examined.

The way we raced caterpillars was to set them in a napkin ring on a table, one facing one way and one the other. Outside the napkin ring was drawn a circle in chalk three feet acrost. Then a man lifted the ring and the handlers was allowed one jab with a darning needle to get their caterpillars started. The one that got outside the chalk circle the first was the one that won the race.

I remember my pa tried out a lot of breeds, and he got hold of some pretty fast steppers. But there wasn't one of them could equal Red Peril. To see him you wouldn't believe he could run. He was all red and kind of stubby, and he had a sort of a wart behind that you'd think would get in his way. There wasn't anything fancy in his looks. He'd just set still studying the ground and make you think he was dreaming about last year's oats; but when you set him in the starting ring he'd hitch himself up behind like a man lifting on his galluses, and then he'd light out for glory.

Pa come acrost Red Peril down in Westernville. Ma's relatives resided there, and it being Sunday we'd all gone in to church. We was riding back in a hired rig with a dandy trotter, and Pa was pushing her right along and Ma was

talking sermon and clothes, and me and my sister was setting on the back seat playing poke your nose, when all of a sudden Pa hollers, 'Whoa!' and set the horse right down on the breeching. Ma let out a holler and come to rest on the dashboard with her head under the horse. 'My gracious land!' she says. 'What's happened?' Pa was out on the other side of the road right down in the mud in his Sunday pants, a-wropping up something in his yeller handkerchief. Ma begun to get riled. 'What you doing, Pa?' she says. 'What you got there?' Pa was putting his handkerchief back into his inside pocket. Then he come back over the wheel and got him a chew. 'Leeza,' he says, 'I got the fastest caterpillar in seven counties. It's an act of Providence I seen him, the way he jumped the ruts.' 'It's an act of God I ain't laying dead under the back end of that horse,' says Ma. 'I've gone and spoilt my Sunday hat.' 'Never mind,' says Pa; 'Red Peril will earn you a new one.' Just like that he named him. He was the fastest caterpillar in seven counties.

When we got back onto the boat, while Ma was turning up the supper, Pa set him down to the table under the lamp and pulled out the handkerchief. 'You two devils stand there and there,' he says to me and my sister, 'and if you let him get by I'll leather the soap out of you.'

So we stood there and he undid the handkerchief, and out walked one of them red, long-haired caterpillars. He walked right to the middle of the table, and then he took a short turn and put his nose in his tail and went to sleep.

'Who'd think that insect could make such a break for freedom as I seen him make?' says Pa, and he got out a empty Brandreth box and filled it up with some towel and put the caterpillar inside. 'He needs a rest,' says Pa. 'He needs to get used to his stall. When he limbers up I'll commence training him. Now then,' he says, putting the box on the shelf back of the stove, 'don't none of you say a word about him.'

He got out a pipe and set there smoking and figuring, and we could see he was studying out just how he'd make a world-beater out of that bug. 'What you going to feed him?' asks Ma. 'If I wasn't afraid of constipating him,' Pa says, 'I'd try him out with milkweed.'

Next day we hauled up the Lansing Kill Gorge. Ned Kilbourne, Pa's driver, come aboard in the morning, and he took a look at that caterpillar. He took him out of the box and felt his legs and laid him down on the table and went clean over him. 'Well,' he says, 'he don't look like a great lot, but I've knowed some of that red variety could chug along pretty smart.' Then he touched him with a pin. It was a sudden sight.

It looked like the rear end of that caterpillar was racing the front end, but it couldn't never quite get by. Afore either Ned or Pa could get a move Red Peril had made a turn around the sugar bowl and run solid aground in the butter dish.

Pa let out a loud swear. 'Look out he don't pull a tendon,' he says. 'Butter's a bad thing. A man has to be careful. Jeepers,' he says, picking him up and taking him over to the stove to dry, 'I'll handle him myself. I don't want no rum-soaked bezabors dishing my beans.'

'I didn't mean harm, Will,' says Ned. 'I was just curious.'

There was something extraordinary about that caterpillar. He was intelligent. It seemed he just couldn't abide the feel of sharp iron. It got so that if Pa reached for the lapel of his coat Red Peril would light out. It must have been he was tender. I said he had a sort of a wart behind, and I guess he liked to find it a place of safety.

We was all terrible proud of that bird. Pa took to timing him on the track. He beat all known time holler. He got to know that as soon as he crossed the chalk he would get back safe in his quarters. Only when we tried sprinting him across

the supper table, if he saw a piece of butter he'd pull up short and bolt back where he come from. He had a mortal fear of butter.

Well, Pa trained him three nights. It was a sight to see him there at the table, a big man with a needle in his hand, moving the lamp around and studying out the identical spot that caterpillar wanted most to get out of the needle's way. Pretty soon he found it, and then he says to Ned, 'I'll race him agin all comers at all odds.' 'Well, Will,' says Ned, 'I guess it's a safe proposition.'

II

We hauled up the feeder to Forestport and got us a load of potatoes. We raced him there against Charley Mack, the bank-walker's Leopard Pillar, one of them tufted breeds with a row of black buttons down the back. The Leopard was well liked and had won several races that season, and there was quite a few boaters around that fancied him. Pa argued for favorable odds, saying he was racing a maiden caterpillar; and there was a lot of money laid out, and Pa and Ned managed to cover the most of it. As for the race, there wasn't anything to it. While we was putting him in the ring—one of them birchbark and sweet grass Indians make—Red Peril didn't act very good. I guess the smell and the crowd kind of upset him. He was nervous and kept fidgeting with his front feet; but they hadn't more'n lifted the ring than he lit out under the edge as tight as he could make it, and Pa touched him with the needle just as he lepped the line. Me and my sister was supposed to be in bed, but Ma had gone visiting in Forestport and we'd snuck in and was under the table, which had a red cloth onto it, and I can tell you there was some shouting. There was some couldn't believe that insect had been inside the ring at all; and there was some said

he must be a cross with a dragon fly or a side-hill gouger; but old Charley Mack, that'd worked in the camps, said he guessed Red Peril must be descended from the caterpillars Paul Bunyan used to race. He said you could tell by the bump on his tail, which Paul used to put on all his caterpillars, seeing as how the smallest pointed object he could hold in his hand was a peavy.

Well, Pa raced him a couple of more times and he won just as easy, and Pa cleared up close to a hundred dollars in three races. That caterpillar was a mammoth wonder, and word of him got going and people commenced talking him up everywhere, so it was hard to race him around these parts.

But about that time the lock keeper of Number One on the feeder come across a pretty swift article that the people round Rome thought high of. And as our boat was headed down the gorge, word got ahead about Red Peril, and people began to look out for the race.

We come into Number One about four o'clock, and Pa tied up right there and went on shore with his box in his pocket and Red Peril inside the box. There must have been ten men crowded into the shanty, and as many more again outside looking in the windows and door. The lock tender was a skinny bezabor from Stittville, who thought he knew a lot about racing caterpillars; and, come to think of it, maybe he did. His name was Henry Buscerck, and he had a bad tooth in front he used to suck at a lot.

Well, him and Pa set their caterpillars on the table for the crowd to see, and I must say Buscerck's caterpillar was as handsome a brute as you could wish to look at, bright bay with black points and a short fine coat. He had a way of looking right and left, too, that made him handsome. But Pa didn't bother to look at him. Red Peril was a natural marvel, and he knew it.

Buscerck was a sly, twirpish man, and he must've heard

about Red Peril—right from the beginning, as it turned out; for he laid out the course in yeller chalk. They used Pa's ring, a big silver one he'd bought second hand just for Red Peril. They laid out a lot of money, and Dennison Smith lifted the ring. The way Red Peril histed himself out from under would raise a man's blood pressure twenty notches. I swear you could see the hair lay down on his back. Why, that black-pointed bay was left nowhere! It didn't seem like he moved. But Red Peril was just gathering himself for a fast finish over the line when he seen it was yeller. He reared right up; he must've thought it was butter, by Jeepers, the way he whirled on his hind legs and went the way he'd come. Pa began to get scared, and he shook his needle behind Red Peril, but that caterpillar was more scared of butter than he ever was of cold steel. He passed the other insect afore he'd got halfway to the line. By Cripus, you'd ought to 've heard the cheering from the Forestport crews. The Rome men was green. But when he got to the line, danged if that caterpillar didn't shy agin and run around the circle twicet, and then it seemed like his heart had gone in on him, and he crept right back to the middle of the circle and lay there hiding his head. It was the pitifullest sight a man ever looked at. You could almost hear him moaning, and he shook all over.

I've never seen a man so riled as Pa was. The water was running right out of his eyes. He picked up Red Peril and he says, 'This here's no race.' He picked up his money and he says, 'The course was illegal, with that yeller chalk.' Then he squashed the other caterpillar, which was just getting ready to cross the line, and he looks at Buscerck and says, 'What're you going to do about that?'

Buscerck says, 'I'm going to collect my money. My caterpillar would have beat.'

'If you want to call that a finish you can,' says Pa, pointing to the squashed bay one, 'but a baby could see he's still got

to reach the line. Red Peril got to wire and come back and got to it again afore your hayseed worm got half his feet on the ground. If it was any other man owned him,' Pa says, 'I'd feel sorry I squashed him.'

He stepped out of the house, but Buscerck laid a-hold of his pants and says, 'You got to pay, Hemstreet. A man can't get away with no such excuses in the city of Rome.'

Pa didn't say nothing. He just hauled off and sunk his fist, and Buscerck come to inside the lock, which was at low level right then. He waded out the lower end and he says, 'I'll have you arrested for this.' Pa says, 'All right; but if I ever catch you around this lock again I'll let you have a feel with your other eye.'

Nobody else wanted to collect money from Pa, on account of his build, mostly, so we went back to the boat. Pa put Red Peril to bed for two days. It took him all of that to get over his fright at the yeller circle. Pa even made us go without butter for a spell, thinking Red Peril might know the smell of it. He was such an intelligent, thinking animal, a man couldn't tell nothing about him.

III

But next morning the sheriff comes aboard and arrests Pa with a warrant and takes him afore a justice of the peace. That was old Oscar Snipe. He'd heard all about the race, and I think he was feeling pleasant with Pa, because right off they commenced talking breeds. It would have gone off good only Pa'd been having a round with the sheriff. They come in arm in arm, singing a Hallelujah meeting song; but Pa was polite, and when Oscar says, 'What's this?' he only says, 'Well, well.'

'I hear you've got a good caterpillar,' says the judge.

'Well, well,' says Pa. It was all he could think of to say.

'What breed is he?' says Oscar, taking a chew.

'Well,' says Pa, 'well, well.'

Ned Kilbourne says he was a red one.

'That's a good breed,' says Oscar, folding his hands on his stummick and spitting over his thumbs and between his knees and into the sandbox all in one spit. 'I kind of fancy the yellor ones myself. You're a connesewer,' he says to Pa, 'and so'm I, and between connesewers I'd like to show you one. He's as neat a stepper as there is in this county.'

'Well, well,' says Pa, kind of cold around the eyes and looking at the lithograph of Mrs. Snipe done in a hair frame over the sink.

Oscar slews around and fetches a box out of his back pocket and shows us a sweet little yellor one.

'There she is,' he says, and waits for praise.

'She was a good woman,' Pa said after a while, looking at the picture, 'if any woman that's four times a widow can be called such.'

'Not her,' says Oscar. 'It's this yellor caterpillar.'

Pa slung his eyes on the insect which Oscar was holding, and it seemed like he'd just got an idee.

'Fast?' he says, deep down. 'That thing run! Why, a snail with the string-halt could spit in his eye.'

Old Oscar come to a boil quick.

'Evidence. Bring me the evidence.'

He spit, and he was that mad he let his whole chew get away from him without noticing. Buscerck says, 'Here,' and takes his hand off'n his right eye.

Pa never took no notice of nothing after that but the eye. It was the shiniest black onion I ever see on a man. Oscar says, 'Forty dollars!' And Pa pays and says, 'It's worth it.'

But it don't never pay to make an enemy in horse racing or caterpillars, as you will see, after I've got around to telling you.

Well, we raced Red Peril nine times after that, all along the Big Ditch, and you can hear to this day—yes, sir—that there never was a caterpillar alive could run like Red Peril. Pa got rich onto him. He allowed to buy a new team in the spring. If he could only've started a breed from that bug, his fortune would've been made and Henry Ford would've looked like a bent nickel alongside of me today. But caterpillars aren't built like Ford cars. We beat all the great caterpillars of the year, and it being a time for a late winter, there was some fast running. We raced the Buffalo Big Blue and Fenwick's Night Mail and Wilson's Joe of Barneveld. There wasn't one could touch Red Peril. It was close into October when a crowd got together and brought up the Black Arrer of Ava to race us, but Red Peril beat him by an inch. And after that there wasn't a caterpillar in the state would race Pa's.

He was mighty chesty them days and had come to be quite a figger down the canawl. People come aboard to talk with him and admire Red Peril; and Pa got the idee of charging five cents a sight, and that made for more money even if there wasn't no more running for the animile. He commenced to get fat.

And then come the time that comes to all caterpillars. And it goes to show that a man ought to be as careful of his enemies as he is lending money to friends.

IV

We was hauling down the Lansing Kill again and we'd just crossed the aqueduct over Stringer Brook when the lock keeper, that minded it and the lock just below, come out and says there was quite a lot of money being put up on a caterpillar they'd collected down in Rome.

Well, Pa went in and he got out Red Peril and tried him

out. He was fat and his stifles acted kind of stiff, but you could see with half an eye he was still fast. His start was a mite slower, but he made great speed once he got going.

'He's not in the best shape in the world,' Pa says, 'and if it was any other bug I wouldn't want to run him. But I'll trust the old brute,' and he commenced brushing him up with a toothbrush he's bought a-purpose.

'Yeanh,' says Ned. 'It may not be right, but we've got to consider the public.'

By what happened after, we might have known that we'd meet up with that caterpillar at Number One Lock; but there wasn't no sign of Buscerck, and Pa was so excited at racing Red Peril again that I doubt if he noticed where he was at all. He was all rigged out for the occasion. He had on a black hat and a new red boating waistcoat, and when he busted loose with his horn for the lock you'd have thought he wanted to wake up all the deaf-and-dumbers in seven counties. We tied by the upper gates and left the team to graze; and there was quite a crowd on hand. About nine morning boats was tied along the towpath, and all the afternoon boats waited. People was hanging around, and when they heard Pa whanging his horn they let out a great cheer. He took off his hat to some of the ladies, and then he took Red Peril out of his pocket and everybody cheered some more.

'Who owns this here caterpillar I've been hearing about?' Pa asks. 'Where is he? Why don't he bring out his pore contraption?'

A feller says he's in the shanty.

'What's his name?' says Pa.

'Martin Henry's running him. He's called the Horned Demon of Rome.'

'Dinged if I ever thought to see him at my time of life,' says Pa. And he goes in. Inside there was a lot of men talking

and smoking and drinking and laying money faster than leg-horns can lay eggs, and when Pa comes in they let out a great howdy, and when Pa put down the Brandreth box on the table they crowded round; and you'd ought to've heard the mammoth shout they give when Red Peril climbed out of his box. And well they might. Yes sir!

You can tell that caterpillar's a thoroughbred. He's shining right down to the root of each hair. He's round, but he ain't too fat. He don't look as supple as he used to, but the folks can't tell that. He's got the winner's look, and he prances into the centre of the ring with a kind of delicate canter that was as near single footing as I ever see a caterpillar get to. By Jeepers Cripus! I felt proud to be in the same family as him, and I wasn't only a little lad.

Pa waits for the admiration to die down, and he lays out his money, and he says to Martin Henry, 'Let's see your ring-boned swivel-hocked imitation of a bug.'

Martin answers, 'Well, he ain't much to look at, maybe, but you'll be surprised to see how he can push along.'

And he lays down the dangedest lump of worm you ever set your eyes on. It's the kind of insect a man might expect to see in France or one of them furrin lands. It's about two and a half inches long and stands only half a thumbnail at the shoulder. It's green and as hairless as a newborn egg, and it crouches down squinting around at Red Peril like a man with sweat in his eye. It ain't natural nor refined to look at such a bug, let alone race it.

When Pa seen it, he let out a shout and laughed. He couldn't talk from laughing.

But the crowd didn't say a lot, having more money on the race than ever was before or since on a similar occasion. It was so much that even Pa commenced to be serious. Well, they put 'em in the ring together and Red Peril kept over on his side with a sort of intelligent dislike. He was the brainiest

article in the caterpillar line I ever knowed. The other one just hunkered down with a mean look in his eye.

Millard Thompson held the ring. He counted, 'One—two—three—and off.' Some folks said it was the highest he knew how to count, but he always got that far anyhow, even if it took quite a while for him to remember what figger to commence with.

The ring come off and Pa and Martin Henry sunk their needles—at least they almost sunk them, for just then them standing close to the course seen that Horned Demon sink his horns into the back end of Red Peril. He was always a sensitive animal, Red Peril was, and if a needle made him start you can think for yourself what them two horns did for him. He cleared twelve inches in one jump—but then he sot right down on his belly, trembling.

'Foull!' bellers Pa. 'My 'pillar's fouled.'

'It ain't in the rule book,' Millard says.

'It's a foull!' yells Pa; and all the Forestport men yell, 'Foull! Foull!'

But it wasn't allowed. The Horned Demon commenced walking to the circle—he couldn't move much faster than a barrel can roll uphill, but he was getting there. We all seen two things, then. Red Peril was dying, and we was losing the race. Pa stood there kind of foamy in his beard, and the water running right out of both eyes. It's an awful thing to see a big man cry in public. But Ned saved us. He seen Red Peril was dying, the way he wiggled, and he figgered, with the money he had on him, he'd make him win if he could.

He leans over and puts his nose into Red Peril's ear, and he shouts, 'My Cripus, you've gone and dropped the butter!'

Something got into that caterpillar's brain, dying as he was, and he let out the smallest squeak of a hollering fright I ever listened to a caterpillar make. There was a convulsion

got into him. He looked like a three-dollar mule with the wind colic, and then he gave a bound. My holy! How that caterpillar did rise up. When he come down again, he was stone dead, but he lay with his chin across the line. He'd won the race. The Horned Demon was blowing bad and only halfway to the line. . . .

Well, we won. But I think Pa's heart was busted by the squeal he head Red Peril make when he died. He couldn't abide Ned's face after that, though he knowed Ned had saved the day for him. But he put Red Peril's carcass in his pocket with the money and walks out.

And there he seen Buscerck standing at the sluices. Pa stood looking at him. The sheriff was alongside Buscerck and Oscar Snipe on the other side, and Buscerck guessed he had the law behind him.

'Who owns that Horned Demon?' says Pa.


'Me,' says Buscerck with a sneer. 'He may have lost, but he done a good job doing it.'

Pa walks right up to him.

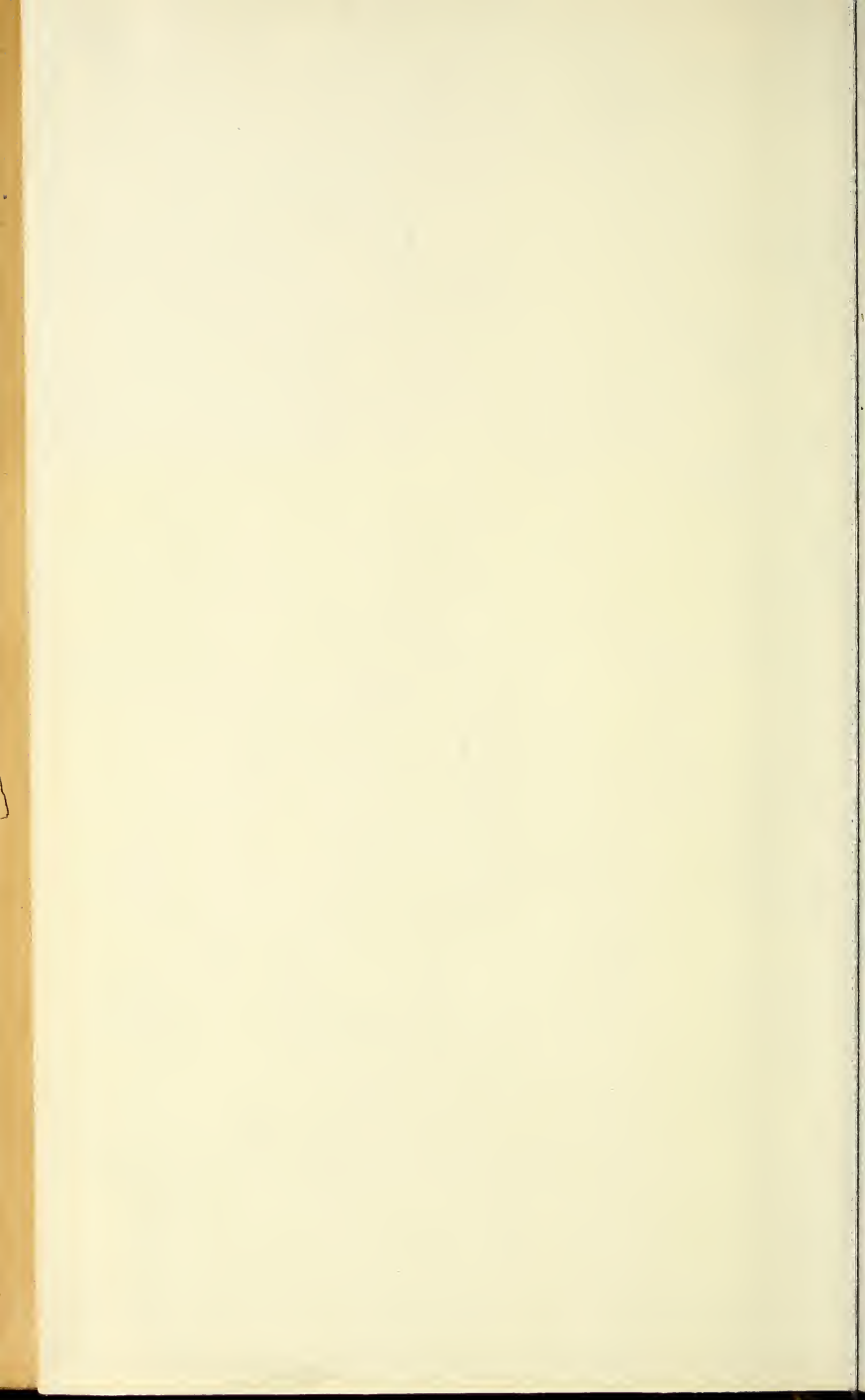
'I've got another forty dollars in my pocket,' he says, and he connected sizably.

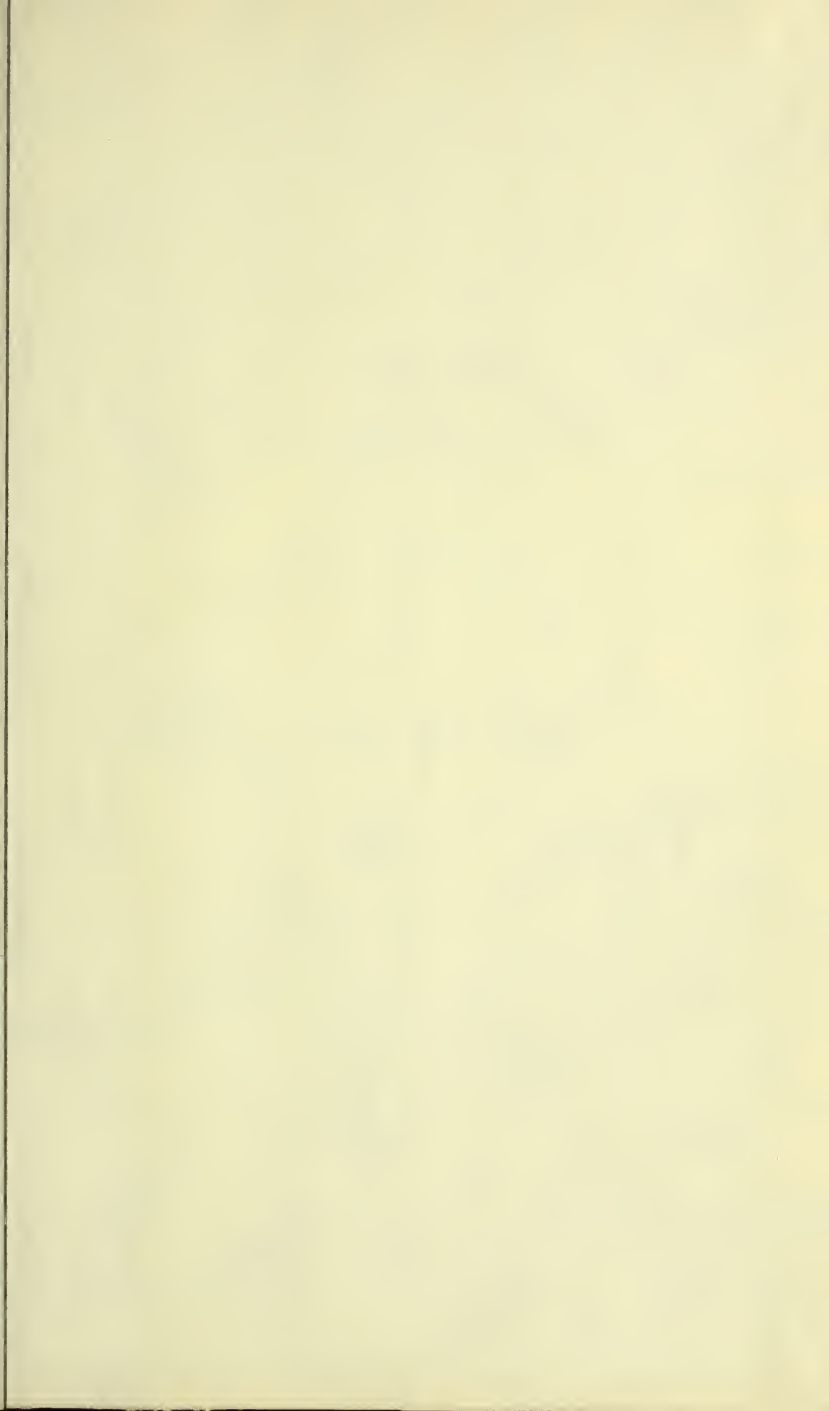
Buscerck's boots showed a minute. Pretty soon they let down the water and pulled him out. They had to roll a couple of gallons out of him afore they got a grunt. It served him right. He'd played foul. But the sheriff was worried, and he says to Oscar, 'Had I ought to arrest Will?' (Meaning Pa.)

Oscar was a sporting man. He couldn't abide low dealing. He looks at Buscerck there, shaping his belly over the barrel, and he says, 'Water never hurt a man. It keeps his hide from cracking.' So they let Pa alone. I guess they didn't think it was safe to have a man in jail that would cry about a caterpillar. But then they hadn't lived alongside of Red Peril like us.











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